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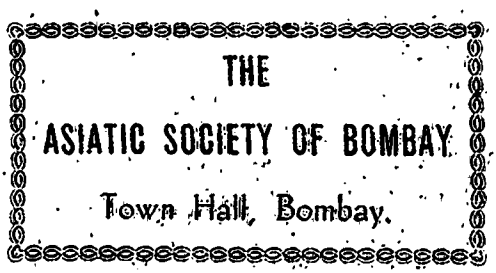


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FROM

# WATERLOO TO THE PENINSULA.

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VOL. II.

FROM

# WATERLOO TO THE PENINSULA.

FOUR MONTHS' HARD LABOUR IN BELGIUM, HOLLAND, GERMANY, AND SPAIN.

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BY

GEORGE AUGUSTUS SALA,

AUTHOR OF

"MY DIARY IN AMERICA IN THE MIDST OF WAR," ETC. ETC.

. . . . . Si tibi vera videtur
Dede manus; et si falsa est, accingere contra.—LUCRETIUS.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

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## CHAPTER II.

### A SPANISH INSURRECTION—MADRID OF TO-DAY—THE VITALITY OF SPAIN.

DULY installed in an upper chamber of the Fonda de los Principes, commanding a full view of the Puerta del Sol, and having hastily ascertained, from the breakfast of which I was entitled to partake, that there *is* such a thing as garlic in Spanish cookery, I proceeded to devote myself to the object of the mission which had brought me some fifteen hundred miles across Continental Europe. I set about investigating the state and prospects of the "insurrection in Spain;" but I speedily found that there was no insurrection to investigate, and that its prospects for the present were *in nubibus*. There had been some trouble, but it was over. I was in at the death. The insurrection has not been stamped out. Indeed, those who were deputed to extinguish it seemed to have given the conflagration a discreetly wide berth; but it had flashed in the pan, burnt in the priming, and did not exist as an actual entirety any more. General Prim and his companions, certainly not five hundred in number, had crossed the frontier into Portugal and laid down their arms. I

had not been five minutes out of doors before a cloud of little newsboys began to spread over the Puerta, crying the *Supplemento Extraordinario de la Correspondencia de Españo;* and I immediately took an *al fresco* lesson in Castilian by buying two cuartos' worth of "Extraordinary Supplement," in which I read the telegraphic despatch of the Governor of Badajos to the Minister of War, setting forth that, at two o'clock in the afternoon of January 19th, *los sublevados*, or insurgents, entered the Portuguese territory, giving up their arms and horses to the Alcalde of Encinasola. These insurgents, the Governor added, had not come in collision with the pursuing force. In truth, the pursuing force or forces seem throughout to have borne in mind that wise, antique proverb which teaches us that it is best to build a bridge for a flying enemy.

There is an end, then, for some time to come, to the enterprise of General Prim, Marquis of Castillejos. An end, but for how long? People say he will be certain to turn up again. *Par mer il reviendra*, as the old women used to prophesy when Napoleon was at St. Helena. He is to make his appearance at Barcelona. He will raise Valencia. He has partisans everywhere. He will proclaim the Red Republic. He will do this, he will do that. You would think the guests at the *table d'hôte* at the Hôtel des Princes were all Lord Burleighs. They shake their heads continually. "There will be no more revolution for some months to come," they say in authoritative accents. But why

should there be a revolution in some months' time? Has Sedition become an accepted bill, and must it fall due in a certain number of days? The Ultra-Progresista party maintained ever since the outbreak of Prim's escapade a discreet reserve. Many even of the advanced Liberals openly disowned the Conde de Reus, or Marques de los Castillejos, as he, Prim, is indifferently called; accused him of having done inappreciable harm to the Liberal cause by his rash and uncalled-for initiative of revolt; and sneered at him as a dreamer, a Socialist, a Fourierist, and the like. The official papers denounced his ingratitude to the sovereign to whom he owes his stars and orders, his rank of count and marquis, and his status of a grandee of Spain of the first class; while his treachery to the country which promoted him from the humble position of a private of volunteers was dwelt upon, but not with the acerbity, not with the customary fury of officiality. Of all bloodhounds, there is none so cruel as the bloodhound which has belonged to opposition, but now wears a gilt governmental collar. But the bandogs hung loosely to Prim's throat. The general sensation seemed one of relief that he was gone, mingled with an uneasy notion that some day or other he will come back again. His disarmed partisans, refugees in Portugal, and "internés" at Encinasola, are to be marched, under proper escort of caçadores, not into the interior, but to Oporto, and thence to Lisbon. Why to Lisbon? There are ships in the Tagus. Slip may be given to the Castle

of Belem. There have been filibustering expeditions ere now. Barcelona and Cadiz are on the sea. The maritime provinces are said to be disaffected; and what a huge part of Spain is maritime province!

From Portugal itself opinions seem unanimous that there is nothing to fear. This fat, flourishing, sausage-shaped little kingdom seems to be blessed with a sovereign, a ministry, and a people eminently endowed with common sense. Portugal, indeed, with revolutionary Spain on her weather-bow, is like a Temperance Lecturer with a "Frightful Example" of inebriety on the platform. Spain may point all kinds of political morals, and adorn no end of tales for the benefit of her neighbour. The Lusitanians for the present seem mainly intent on minding their own business. The recent voyage of the King Dom Luis (by all accounts a most sensible and well-advised young man), and his visit to the Spanish Royal family at Madrid, are understood to be a direct contradiction to any reports that he would favour the idea of territorial aggrandisement at the expense of Queen Isabella. In Spain itself there has been for a considerable period a party favourable to a fusion of the two countries, or rather of the annexation of Spain to Portugal under a sovereign of the House of Braganza. The Portuguese decline to listen to the voice of the charmer. Their country is large enough for them, and they do not wish to increase it. For example, suppose you asked the occupant of one of those snug, trim little villas at Hanwell, on the Great

Western Railway, whether he would like to have that lordly lunatic asylum close by "annexed" to his dwelling. He would decline with thanks.

If Dom Luis became sovereign of a United Lusitano-Iberian kingdom, his capital would necessarily be, or would very soon become, Madrid, and the Portuguese would speedily find that, so far from Spain being annexed to them, they had become a mere province of Spain, with full right of participation in all the scandals, the corruptions, the intrigues, the factions, and the disturbances of that ill-fated but magnificent kingdom. Old Talleyrand could count, up to thirteen, the oaths of allegiance he had taken; but what Castilian Cocker could sum up the revolutions of Spain? They are more numerous than the amours of the Libertine of Seville. And yet I read in a governmental print that "the soil of Spain does not favour the growth even of the elements of revolt." O Modesty, where hast thou hidden thyself? This astounding remark reminds one of the touching observation made by Agitator Wilkes in extreme old age, that "he had never been a Wilkite."

The truth may be that the verbs "to conspire" and "to revolt" have been rather too extensively circulated among all classes in Spain. The Minister of to-day is the *pronunciado* of yesterday. The *Juez de Paz* has been "out" in his time with a price on his head. Ministerial crises are not conducted here by means of Home Office messengers with red boxes. Cabinets are

dissolved in barrack-yards; and the answer to an adverse vote is an appeal to the arms-rack. The Spaniards themselves seem to be aware of, and ashamed of, the existence of that evil spirit in the army. "Military sedition," says *La Epoca*, "has disappeared from every civilized nation save Spain." But there must be something in the background to encourage, or at least to tolerate, "military sedition." The Roman Prætorians could not have sold the purple to the highest bidder, and clapped it on the shoulders of a gouty, drivelling mass of moneybags, had not the Empire become as rotten as a medlar, and ready to fall. After all, the Spanish soldier is not ninety feet high, or Hydra-headed, or Briareus-armed, or steel-clad like the Warrior and the Black Prince. Were the people in earnest —did they really make up their minds to make an end of that which is not only a scandal and a curse to Spain, but to all Europe—the soldier, his seditions and his *pronunciamientos*, might be very soon and satisfactorily put down.

To the fact that the population of Catalonia are so thoroughly in earnest, and utterly weary of anarchy and bloodshed, the final collapse of the Carlist cause in Spain must be ascribed. The mountains of Catalonia were once the chosen stronghold of Carlism. In 1855 a military revolt in favour of the Conde de Montemolin, and again in regiments of cavalry, broke out at Saragossa. It was soon suppressed; but a few of the leaders penetrated by the Pyrenees from the capital of

Arragon into Catalonia. At a well-known mountain rendezvous the old partisans of the Carlist cause were convened; but their spokesman, a sensible farmer, told the insurgent chieftain plainly that the Catalans had had enough of Don Carlos, the Conde de Montemolin, Don Juan de Borbon, and the entire set of pretenders, and were resolved to have no more to do with them. "Our opinions have not changed," he said, "we are as orthodox and as legitimist as ever; but our fathers, our sons, and our brothers have been killed in these accursed faction fights; the best years of our lives have been spent in fighting for a phantom; we cannot till our land; we cannot send our stock to market; we toil like slaves, and what is our reward? To be harried, burnt up, hunted into caves like wild beasts, or hunted out and shot." So Carlism took little by the motion that time in Catalonia. It may be considered, at this writing, as dead as any door-nail all over Spain. It is brought to its final cause, and is logically defunct. Republicanism may have some partisans; but Republicanism with Imperial France for a neighbour is simply an impossibility. Within three months of the declaration of a Republic in Madrid, the legions of Cæsar would be marching out of Bayonne on the road to Irun.

A constitutional monarchy, a free press, ample representation, form a political condition to which the Spanish people appear eminently suited. Did they make up their minds rationally and earnestly to work

out, in a legal and constitutional manner, the many reforms they need, "military sedition" in Spain would be of no more account than a row in the streets of Portsmouth between some tipsy soldiers. A picket might put it down. But the people do *not* seem to be in earnest. They believe in little, high or low—least of all in that which should be, to them, the very highest, otherwise we should not have had a discontented, or ambitious, or feather-headed soldier, even though he be a Marquis and Senator, debauching a regiment or so of dragoons, raising the standard of revolt, and taking to the hills. General Prim, Marquis of Castillejos, has done what John Graham of Claverhouse, Viscount of Dundee, did one hundred and eighty years ago. He defied the "Lords of Convention;" threw up his bonnet, called boot and saddle, and plunged into the Highlands; but the Spaniard's enterprise has been crowned by no Killiecrankie, nor by a glorious victory; and the fiery cross which Prim sent abroad has gone out in most ignominious sputtering. Had the Spanish people at large any real, definite feeling for or against an act which possesses equally the aspect of a mere filibustering raid like that of Mauricio Lopez in Cuba, and of a desperate political gambler's *coup* like that of Louis Napoleon at Boulogne? You will find half-a-dozen civilian Spaniards who will tell you that Prim has no sympathizers out of a few barrack-rooms and aguardiente shops; but the next six will declare that Marshal O'Donnell was in the right when

he stigmatized the insurrectionary attempt as the result of a deeply-laid and most dangerous conspiracy; and they add that even the Duke of Tetuan is unaware of the extent to which the ramifications of that conspiracy have been carried.

Is civil society, too, conspiring? I think not. The press is virulent enough, in a governmental, Moderado, reactionary, or radical sense, according to its particular "stripe," as the Yankees would say; but there are no signs of absolute sedition, or of appeals to revolt. Vague accusations of "Red Republicanism" have been levelled against Prim; but they are about as credible, I should say, as the other assertions of his being *un loco* —a stark, staring madman, who undertook his enterprise in a fit of real, not metaphorical insanity. One influential journal, *La Epoca*, pointing out what a disastrous effect these perpetual broils must have on the opinions formed of Spain by foreign nations, states, in illustration, that in England a "certain periodical has gravely recommended the systematic partition of the peninsula between the great Powers, as the only means left of abrogating scandals which have become intolerable." What periodical can it be which has thus "gravely recommended" this chirurgical operation *à la Polonaise?* The dismemberment of Spain, I should think, would be about as easy a process as the dismemberment of Great Britain.

With all their revolutions, their debts, their many barbarisms—some as old as the days of Ferdinand and

Isabella, others older than those of Muley Abderahman —this Spain is still a nation, a thousand times better off, fuller of hope and promise, fuller of wealth and industry than she was when Godoy was Prince of the Peace, and she yet possessed the Indies. After fifty revolutions and fifty semi-bankruptcies, she has yet steered clear, in an astonishing manner too, of absolute anarchy and absolute destitution. There has always been a cruse of oil, and a shot left in the locker. She has escaped a Reign of Terror, she has escaped a paper eruption of assignats. She has certainly not paid her way; but her indebtedness has been splendid, like Pitt's, not squalid like Codrus's. After all the reader has heard and read these twenty years past about the decay, the exhaustion, and the decrepitude of Spain; the ignorance, the laziness, and the superstition of Spaniards—their stupid pride, their ridiculous prejudices, even a couple of days' sojourn in the Spanish metropolis would astound him, as it has astounded me. I was in good case for contrasts. I had had nearly a month's study of Berlin, *de die in diem*. I took a bath of high-pressure fever-heat civilization in Paris, and then I came on to Madrid. I declare that after the dull, dirty, sour, pragmatical Prussian capital, Queen Isabella's is as Paris compared with Calais. The city is full of life and movement, of busy crowds, of splendid equipages, of cabs and omnibuses, of horsemen and footmen, of newsboys and street-vendors. Scarce a dead wall but has its *fungo* of live bookstalls—books in

all languages. Scarce a street corner but is placarded with booksellers' advertisements and announcements of day-schools for the study of "mathematics, book-keeping, and the French and English languages." A population furious to read and go to school cannot, I take it, be in a thoroughly hopeless way. The city is well paved, brilliantly lit, well watched, and ten times cleaner than any German city I have ever seen. The humbler classes smell of garlic, certainly; but what do the English lower classes smell of? Misery, and hunger, and gin. After two days' tramping about the streets of Madrid, I have not met one creature with bare feet. I know I never walked up Oxford-street or the Strand without meeting half a dozen.

The miserable sights are all, of course, to come. When I make Seville or Granada, my pencil, doubtless, will be dipped in tints other than *couleur de rose*. But I know, from the testimony of many credible witnesses, that the cities on the sea-coast are even more bustling and prosperous than Madrid; and from my own observation, limited as it must necessarily be, I can vouch for the Spanish capital showing, outwardly, but very few signs of decay or exhaustion or decrepitude. It strikes a stranger, on the contrary, as being what in the Transatlantic vocabulary is termed "quite a place," and one of the most "go-ahead" description. You will pardon my naïve confession of agreeable disappointment; but, in common with, I dare say, many untravelled Englishmen, I had fancied Madrid to be a rambling,

ruinous, filthy, poverty-stricken city, full of professional beggars and scarcely less beggarly hidalgos—a welter-ing heap, indeed, of pride, prejudice, dust, rags, fleas, and priestcraft. But the Madrid I have lighted upon is quite another city. One cannot be here a day with-out feeling that the dreary Carlist-Cristino internecine war thirty years since has borne some good fruit.

The Spaniards have been so ineffably blessed as to have got rid of the monks; and although we hear a great many Munchausen stories palmed on silly foreigners by Iberian wags about the Queen of Spain wearing the cast-off chemises of the nun Sor Patrocinio —although we know that, in obedience to an old cus-tom, when Her Majesty, riding in her carriage, meets the Host passing in procession, she reverently alights from her equipage, surrenders it to the custodians of the Holy Sacrament, and enters another carriage always following her own, in case of need—although, in pur-suance of another ancient observance, Royalty, as well as other Madrilena ladies, when in an interesting situa-tion, sends rich dresses and ornaments to the Virgin of Atocha—and although, at matin and vesper time, the neighbourhood of the churches is dotted black with mantillas and missal-bearers, it is consolatory to know that the priests have become a very feeble folk, and that few care to listen to their incantations. Whatever comes to Spain, she will never again endure a petticoat-embroidering Ferdinand or a Holy Office. More or less despotic Governments may rule her; but he must

be a thorough master of *coups d'état* who would thoroughly crush out the representative institutions or the free press of Spain. I say this because I have not yet conversed with one liberal Spaniard who did not speak of the Carlist-Cristino struggle as an American speaks of the War of Independence with Great Britain.

Where, then, does the shoe pinch? Where is really the seat of the disease? How comes it that a country whose trade is increasing, whose prosperity is augmenting, whose credit is reviving, and who in every fresh mile of railway laid sees a new resource developed—and the development thereof may ere long sweep up and garnish that stony chaos I saw in the North—should have been so long, and should be still a hotbed of a sedition, of faction, of mummery, or of what is scarcely better, of a sulkily contemptuous indifference to the interests of the commonwealth? The Spaniards who stand aloof are, I think, as much, if not more to be feared than the Spaniards who intrigue or conspire. In that huge picture in the Luxembourg of the "Decadence of the Romans," you may see, in a corner, two stern, honest, ancient Roman citizens, looking on the lazy, wanton Sybarites, half in pity, half in scorn. They are sad critics of the scene which the Goths and Vandals may commentate. Here there may be Spaniards looking on, with eyes as stern and sad, at something—at what? At one ulcer. But where is it? I am new to Spain, and do not know—*nec si sciam, dicere ausim.*

## CHAPTER III.

### SPANISH SOLDIERS—THE GRENDARMERIE—THE SERGEANTS OF THE SPANISH ARMY.

THE Spanish soldier is a fine fellow, usually handsome, well set up, alert, and with an inkling of intelligence in his bright black eyes. He does not run large, but he is not weak at the knees, like the shaky colossus whom the vanity of princes keeps about their persons. He smokes to an extent which approaches excess, and would horrify Mr. Solly; but, save when he becomes seditious, and "pronounces" against the existing Government or Ministry, he does not get tipsy. He is given to twiddling his thumbs, and meditating in a dreamy manner on things in general, as he sits on his guard-room bench; but he does not hulk about the streets, glowering on civilians, or going into and out of the dram-shops, or passing by slow transitions from the prowling to the staggering stage when off duty, as our unhappy beef-fed warriors do. On Sundays, when he has a plume in his shako, he gives himself great airs, in common with most soldiers under that feathery condition. It is the plume that turns the drum-major's head; and are not lancers and chasseurs de Vincennes

the most conceited of all military men? He will fight very well on his own soil and elsewhere, this Spanish soldier, and seems to me a hundred times brisker than that ungainliest of louts, the Russian foot-soldier, who, although drilled within an inch of his life, never knows what to do with his large hands and feet; who appears to be suffering from incipient anchylosis, so stiff and wooden are his joints, and who would be toppled over by his heavy spiked helmet but for his huge needle-rifle and bayonet, which he holds as a rope-dancer does his balancing-pole.

I have made acquaintance with the Spanish soldier ere this, in Havana, where in summer he is sensibly clad in a suit of seersucker, with a broad-brimmed straw hat and a red cockade, the only sign of his military status; but when on parade and when the band plays in the Plaza de Armas he appears in all the splendour of the elaborate make-up devised by Spanish army tailors. I see him now, in the Puerta del Sol, much multiplied. The Palace of the Gobernacion is full of him. Great benches, crowded with soldiers, stretch along the pavement on each side of the portico of this imposing edifice. His horses are picketed in the midst of the open space and round the great fountain. He is at all the street corners. He stands sentry—and, as will presently be shown, somebody else stands sentry over him, for the guards are doubled now before all the public buildings. He is here in every variety of brave apparel: in helmet and low-crowned shako and busby; in blue trousers

and red trousers; in white cloak with scarlet cape, and scarlet cloak with white cape.

And yet I am told that, at the present moment, only a very small portion of the garrison of Madrid are visible to the actual eye. He lies perdu, that soldier: he is kept dark—not as the wary old Iron Duke concealed his little army, in prisons, and workhouses, and livery stables, on the eve of the memorable tenth of April, 1848—made them couch, panther-like, ready for a spring—but in an uncomfortable, unconfiding manner. It is only the very good boys of the garrison of Madrid who are to be seen about. The bad boys, and the indifferent boys, and those whom the Government fears as likely to become either or both, are confined to their barracks till the political atmosphere, now somewhat electric, not to say thunder and lightning charged, shall have cleared up a little. It is the invaluable Ollendorf who is careful to inform the student that the Spanish language is very easy to pronounce; and the Spanish soldier seems a perfect master of pronunciation. He is continually "pronouncing" for or against somebody.

Whence this military mania for upsetting existing things? The Spanish soldier seems the only hired warrior in the world who meddles with politics. The French army seldom, if ever, did. The brave men who, after Waterloo, were called "*les brigands de la Loire,*" might have kept a civil war alive for two years; but their chief being vanquished and a captive, they accepted the Restoration quietly. The American army,

to their undying honour, have refrained from casting their swords into the political scale. This Federal general runs a saw-mill; that one sells dry goods; this major is the proprietor of a sleeping car on the Hudson River railway; that captain is studying law at Buffalo. The privates have gone back to the plough, the loom, and the bench. The French army, it is true, sulked after '48, for they were scurvily treated by the Provisional Government; but they were loyal to the Republic until a Princely-Presidential decree told them there was no longer a Republic to which to be faithful. As for the British soldier, he cares no more about politics than Canning's needy knife-grinder. They are to him a sealed book. He is occasionally anxious to desert, and the blandishments of beer or the rhetoric of rum may enable a crafty conspirator sometimes to get him to accept a suit of civilian clothes, and give him a rendezvous at Cork; but, apart from these considerations, I question whether all the Fenian agents that Union-square could send forth would be able to seduce so much as a sergeant's guard of English soldiers from their allegiance. Sterne thought he had done a very absurd action when he fed a donkey with macaroons, but he might have capped the climax of absurdity by speaking about a democratic and social republic to a British grenadier.

That you can talk to a Spanish soldier, and with baleful effect too, on these and kindred topics, is, unhappily, but too manifest from the history of the last

few years. What sage well indoctrinated in Peninsular politics will tell me the reason why? Is it that the quick-witted, somewhat sceptical Spanish warrior—now that the monks and their miracles are no more, and even the priests are at a discount—is wanting in faith and strong belief? A soldier, it is clear, should be clad in implicit belief as in armour. He should swallow the whole Thirty-nine Articles of War, or he is useless. The French soldier *does* believe strongly in his colonel, in the martial traditions of his nation, in glory, in the eagle, and in the vivandière of the regiment; nay, sometimes he may feel a titillating tension at the extremities of his cross-belts, as though some fairy hand were slipping into his cartouche-box the bâton of a marshal of France. The German soldier, I suppose, believes in beer and Vaterland, and the coming of the blessed time when his term of slavery shall have expired, and he have done with soldiering altogether.

The English soldier, too, believes very firmly. I am afraid that his faith leads principally to the simple conviction that he is in for it; that he has taken the Queen's shilling, and must work it out; that it is rather a bad job than otherwise, but that he would be a rogue to refuse to perform his contract. It is only the rogues and the raw lads who desert. The ordinary private in the British army fights, with gun or bayonet, to the death, just as he would fight with his fists in civil life. Is he not, by nature, a fighting animal? As for glory, it does not mean to him more than a

medal with one or more clasps, worth about three and sixpence, and his share of the Banda and Kirwee booty —when he can get it. Whatever is, to him, is right; the beer-shop, the cheap *amours*, the guard-room cells. He thinks it perfectly just and proper that he should be commanded by a brave little boy fresh from school. He rather likes it even when he is old and grizzled. Is not the little boy one of the "gentlefolks," and did he not bow and scrape his leg to the little boy's father when he, the veteran, was a young hedger and ditcher? So he does his duty in that state of life in which the law of entail, primogeniture, and game-preserving have pleased to call him; and no more dreams of having golden stars upon his collar, or a commission in his pocket, than as a farm labourer he dreamed of owning the acres which for twelve shillings a week he tilled.

But this Spanish man? Is it that he has no fixed belief, no lord, squire, trusted chief, to look up to? Or is it that he thinks, and in his vain imaginings fancies, that he can govern Castille and Arragon as well as a Duke of Tetuan or a Marquis of Castillejos? This is what I want my Spanish politician to tell me. Why should the army "pronounce" so often and the people so seldom? and why should a military revolt, successful or unsuccessful, appear to have so slight an effect on the general condition of affairs? "But you, what have you invented, *Gualches?*" Voltaire asked disdainfully of his countrymen. They answered in 1789, amid the smoking ruins of the Bastille, "The art of insurrection."

The Spaniards have outdone the "*Gualches.*" They have invented the art of undergoing revolutions without being ruined, without losing even their spirits or their temper. They have even combined the art of prospering with that of "pronouncing." I don't think it is because they are volatile or frivolous, or given to dancing on volcanoes, or feasting after earthquakes. I am sure it is not because they are stupid or unimpressionable. I think it is because they are grave philosophers, and that *pronunciamientos* having grown to be chronic among them, they bear them as stoically as the Creoles on the Spanish Main bear with the yellow fever. What cannot be cured must be endured. "And you will observe, nevertheless," said a Spanish gentleman to me, "that although we have had perhaps thirty revolutions during as many years, we have had but one sovereign since the death of Ferdinand; whereas our neighbours the French have seen, during an equal period, one king, one republic, and one emperor." Monarchy may be, after all, one of the things in which the Spaniards have not implicit faith. Did they believe strongly in the dignity of that institution, it is possible that they might have overturned the existing dynasty long since, and set up another in its place.

In the absurdest suggestions there is sometimes a grain of sense. When Bombastes Furioso dismissed his brave army, he bade them "begone, and not kick up a row." Now, the Spanish army have, to use the

Furiosan expression, been kicking up a row for so many years as to have become almost unbearable. Why not dismiss them altogether? A strong police force, modelled half on the Rue de Jerusalem, half on the Scotland-yard principle, would suffice to keep the country in order; and of foreign warfare Spain has surely had enough. She took little indeed by her motion in Morocco—although there Prim got his laurels and O'Donnell his ducal coronet; she took less in San Domingo; and least of all in Chili. No Life Guards would be necessary for purposes of regal splendour; the staff of footmen at Aranjuez and La Granja might be doubled. They might even carry halberts, like our Gentlemen-at-Arms. There would be little danger of a *pronunciamiento* among the Spanish Jeameses, or "Jaímes," to be more correct. Jeames never would pronounce his h's, and flunkeys are, besides, the most loyal creatures alive. The true king to them is he who pays wages, and stints not the servants' hall of beer and beef. When Napoleon came back from Elba the first sight that met his view in the vestibule of the Tuileries was a trusty band of *valets de pied*, who had lustily donned their old green liveries, and were ready, ay, ready, to fetch and carry as of yore.

That this suggestion for replacing soldiers by policemen is not so egregious as on its face it may appear, is sufficiently proved by the fact that the police have been instrumental in averting the peril of military disturbance from Madrid. The Government, it is roundly

asserted, could not depend on the garrison. They were not precisely rife for revolt or openly disaffected; but they were in that state of political dubiety in which one might suppose a Jacobite laird in the '45, whose father had fought at Sheriffmuir, would have been on hearing that Prince Charles had beaten Sir John Cope at Prestonpans. That state of dubiety is a sufficiently dangerous one. The authorities, therefore, confined all the suspected regiments to barracks. On the artillerymen they could fully depend. This, too, is natural. A bombadier is obviously an adherent to the *status quo*. A battery cannot revolt as easily as a battalion. A soldier thinks twice before committing a big gun, with its limber, its powder-waggons, sponges, and buckets, to insurrection. He cannot bolt away with an eighteen-pounder, and dodge about mountain passes with a partisan leader. The cannoneers being, therefore, trustworthy, the ruling powers bethought themselves, as auxiliaries, of the *guardias civiles*, and especially of the numerous and efficient corps of gendarmerie, stationed not only in Madrid but in the provinces.

These men, who are as loyal as loyal can be, have been drawn in from all parts of the kingdom, to the number, it is said, of five or six thousand. They are posted in all the barracks, and they are in great force at the Palace of the Gobernacion opposite, keeping watch and ward over the soldiers as they sit twiddling their thumbs on the guard-room benches. There is a deluge of cocked hats in Madrid just now. I fancied

the city had been invaded by Bumbles and ancient beadles of the India House. They are active, stern, resolute men, these gendarmes, and might give charge to Mr. Carlyle for his memorable apostrophe anent the typical Life Guardsman. He, said the historian, was no sham, no windbag. He was a reality. If meddled with, verily he would shoot or stab. But the soldier may be disarmed, and then is of no more use than a rudderless ship; whereas the power of the police agent is moral as well as material. Trifle with the gendarme, and verily he will take you into custody.

Who is to keep the keepers in Madrid, you may ask? The gendarme needs no keeping; he is always to be depended upon. It is not his business to fight, but to prevent others from fighting. The police never loses its power. Dynasties come and go, but the police remain. We read in histories of the French Revolution that when the ruffian executioner slapped the cheek of poor guillotined Charlotte Corday, as he held her severed head up for the mob to stare at, "the police imprisoned him for the outrage to public decency." What police? To believe the historians, the police had been utterly abolished as a vestige of aristocracy by the Committee of Public Safety. You are not to believe the historians. The police were alive, and continued to flourish potent though occult in their dark nook. They were the same police who had owned D'Argenson and Lenoir for masters, and who were afterwards to obey Fouché, and who now obey Boitelle.

I have heard it stated by civilians, that it is not the commissioned officers, that it is not even the private men of the Spanish army, who are to be feared, but the sergeants. Those terrible non-commissioners are the chief *pronunciamiento* makers. "*Sulpizio, sergente*" it is, the hale, arrogant, intriguing man you see in the *Gazza Ladra*, who stirs up sedition in the legions of the Catholic Queen. And there are Spanish sergeants who have become Captains-General of Cuba, Ministers of War, Dukes, and Peers even. Sergeants have been seen near the steps of the throne. I bethink me that I was hasty, just now, in saying that French soldiers had never meddled with politics. There rise up before me the gory phantoms of the four sergeants of La Rochelle who, under the Restoration, brewed a conspiracy against the Bourbons, and were mercilessly guillotined. Their history is one of the dismalest in the modern *causes célèbres*. Frenchmen still shudder when they speak of "Les Quatre Sergents;" but sergeants enough and to spare have gone that way in Spain. On the very day of my arrival there were shot to death two non-commissioned officers of the regiment of Figueras, stationed at Alcalá, a place dangerously near Madrid. If these sergeants were really guilty of the intent imputed to them, they—the exigency of things considered—did certainly deserve death by the bullet. There is a huge convict prison at Alcalá, where I know not how many hundred—I have heard, indeed, three or four thousand—galley slaves of

the worst kind are confined. The design of the sergeants, always according to Rumour, was to raise the garrison, liberate the convicts—who were to march upon Madrid—cut the gas-pipes and the telegraph wires, sack the bank, and commit other and unspeakable horrors. The conspiracy, if conspiracy there was, has been nipped in the bud. It seems proved that the doomed men had striven to seduce the private soldiers from their duty. At all events, they were tried, very summarily, and, after a short shrift, shot. You know that in Spain, ere a criminal is executed, he is put *en capilla,* as it is termed, into a chapel, or some retired place which may serve for one, there with ghostly council to prepare for death. One of these wretched men at Alcalá, ceding to the importunities of his confessor, avowed the justice of his sentence, and at the place of execution harangued his comrades and exhorted them to remain true to their colours. The other died impenitent, with that calm disdain of death which seems inherent to the Spanish race, and which, to the astonishment of the French in Mexico, was often apparent even among the debased half-blood guerilleros. They could not understand how brigands and footpads could go to the scaffold with Spartan fortitude.

These military executions are the horrid red-letter days in the calendar of Revolution. Never a *pronunciamiento* without its tale of courts-martial, firing parties, victims with bandaged eyes, and sharp death-dealing volleys. *La culpa venga la culpa,* say the Spaniards

—for military crimes military punishment. It is, nevertheless, sufficiently frightful. At Barcelona, and at Valencia also, there have been courts-martial and shootings; and several stragglers from Prim's insurgent force, picked up in the villages lining the Portuguese frontier, have been, with scant ceremony, *pasados por las armas*—shot. The Government, however, keeps these transactions as quiet as possible. The press in Madrid seems to enjoy a really surprising amount of freedom, and no desire to gag it is attributed to the authorities; but there are more ways of preventing a newspaper from making disagreeable revelations than gagging it. The Government have left the press but little to talk about. They have pounced on the telegraph, and allow no actual political intelligence to circulate, save that which has filtered through the Ministries of War and the Interior.

## CHAPTER IV.

### MADRID IN A STATE OF SIEGE—THE SPANISH NEWSPAPER PRESS.

I HAVE as yet omitted to remark that Madrid at the moment of my visit was in a state of siege, which is, indeed, own brother to martial law, which is anybody's law, that is to say, no law at all. *El sitio* notwithstanding, things in general are both exceedingly tranquil and exceedingly cheerful in the Spanish capital. I remember, when the second invasion of Maryland took place, and the Confederates were thundering at the very gates of Baltimore, the New Yorkers, taking you a round of evening parties, theatres, concerts, sanitary fairs, and drives in the Central Park, used to ask you triumphantly, "If *that* looked like civil war?" It did not indeed. It looked much more like the Carnival. In like manner, were the Spaniards a mercurial and volatile race, and not the gravest and soberest people on the earth's surface, they might ask a stranger if the existing aspect of Madrid in any way resembled that of a city in a state of siege. I don't think it does. It is the height of the opera season, and theatres besides may be counted by the half-score. For the humbler

classes there are masked balls—which, however, out of deference to *el sitio*, close at midnight. The city gates are not shut at gunfire, principally, perhaps, because there are no gates to shut. Madrid abounds in *Puertas*, but they have no doors, and the *Puertas* are so called, I suppose, on the *lucus a non lucendo* principle. "They calls us vatermen," replied the individual in oil-skin on the London stand, to the inquisitive gentleman, "becos ve opens the hackney-coach doors." The Prado is thronged from three till six o'clock every afternoon; and the horses, which almost every Madrileno seems to ride, drive, or be drawn by, have certainly not been impressed for the service of the artillery. The shops are all open, and not a word is heard about pillage or forced loans. A metallic currency still holds its own, which for us *estrangeros* is rather a lucky thing, as the Spaniards take care to inform us that nearly all the bank notes of denominations above two hundred reals now in circulation are forged. I don't believe this, any more than I believe that the atmosphere of Madrid is perilous, and almost mortally so to strangers:

> Es tan subtil
> Que mata á un hombre, y no apaga un candil.

'Tis so keen and subtle, they tell you, that it will pierce like a sword through the lungs of a man, and yet fail to blow out the flame of a taper. But you know with what tales travellers are fed. The art of "cramming" has been practised among all nations, in all ages, from

that of Herodotus downwards. Happy are they who swallow the fewest fibs!

Gay, musical, silver-voiced, many-belled, active, and gesticulating as it is, Madrid is still besieged; and from that Casa de Gobernacion opposite my window there could, if need be, proceed edicts to make the state of siege felt as a substantial gyve and gag. But the Government have, to their great honour, refrained from doffing the velvet glove from the iron hand. The clubs, it is true, have been closed; the reign of *baccarat* and *trente-et-quarante* temporarily arrested; and the ultra-Progresista press quietly warned that they must refrain for a season from the agreeable line of polemics which they ordinarily follow. Do you know what that line is? It consists in asserting day after day that the Ministers are a gang of pickpockets, and the Chambers a den of thieves; that the great personages at Court, to the very highest, are no better than they should be; that the country is ruined, the people in a state of abject slavery, and the only hope for Spain and Spaniards—this is from the *ne plus ultra* party—is in the establishment of a democratic and social republic. You will admit that to administer constitutional government with an Opposition press of such a calibre is, to say the least, a difficult and delicate task.

The Spanish press is occasionally prosecuted, and there are, I fear, a few journalists in gaol; but the liberty, or rather the licence, of abuse and sedition which it ordinarily enjoys is astounding. Hence, per-

haps, its small influence for good, and its very great influence for evil. Almost every paper in Madrid is the organ of a faction, and its aim is simply, by virulence and vehemence, to accomplish the end that faction has in view—namely, to turn Señor Don A. out of office, and to instal Señor Don B. in his place. No veil of the anonymous shrouds the press. The leading articles are just printed speeches delivered from the Opposition bench of black and white; and politicians "write newspapers" against one another precisely as American Congressmen blackguard each other by name in the House. We in England are justly proud of our free press—the only press, perhaps, in the entire world which is absolutely free, for one does not call the bestial riot of the *New York Herald* freedom. The Roman slave during the Saturnalia got drunk, wore his master's toga, and snapped his fingers in his face; but on the morrow he was a slave again, and amenable to the thong. The English press is solidly and immutably free; but did any contributor venture to write in the columns of an English paper a tithe of the scurrility and treason which has been pointed out to my notice in back numbers of the advanced Opposition press in Madrid, he would find himself the object of the most earnest solicitude on the part of Her Majesty's Attorney-General, and on his way to the Old Bailey, ere he could invoke the secular saint familiarly termed Jack Robinson.

French, German, Spanish journalists, when called to account for their direct appeals to rebellion and anarchy,

hotly hold up the liberty enjoyed by the English press as an excuse and an example. They know little of the rods which in quiet pickle lie dormant, and which, upon occasion, as in the instance of the *Irish People*, can be brought out, and used too with the most slashing effect. They know nothing of the scorpion-whips of the English law of libel—whips wielded in a most trenchant manner every week in the year, which are at the call of every common barrister, or costs-hunting pettifogger. Just before leaving Berlin, I noticed that the Prussian Opposition press, in emulation of a Parisian journal, had published a "martyrology" of the year 1865. Some two hundred prosecutions had taken place against the Berlin papers in the course of twelve months. One journal, the *Social Democrat*, boasted of nine convictions; but the penalties inflicted did not exceed, in most instances, a fine of a few thalers, or imprisonment for a few days.

Compare with this our "martyrology," did we deign to sum it up, or to build false reasoning upon it! Happily in the better part of the United Kingdom loyalty and common-sense render the writing of treason impossible; but in Ireland, when treason becomes overt, it is punishable, not with fine or easy durance, but with the captivity and the labour of a felon. In the face of a sentence of ten years' penal servitude, passed on a wretched book-keeper in a newspaper office, the less we declaim against the horrors of Cayenne, Spandau, and the Spielburg—bygone horrors too—the better; while,

when we look at civil life, we find that it may cost an English newspaper many hundreds of pounds, or the weary agony of a protracted lawsuit with an adversary who is a pauper, merely for exposing the malpractices of an arrant rogue, or a notorious quack. The iron severity of British laws when the press really offends in no way militates against the noble and rational freedom which it possesses. Although a capricious and ill-defined law of libel does press hardly on our Fourth Estate, a respectable English newspaper stands no more in danger of political prosecution or penal servitude than a well-behaved soldier or sailor does of being flogged.

The Spanish journals should, therefore, I think, feel grateful for the almost entire impunity with which they are permitted not only to abuse the powers that be in the richest Castilian Billingsgate, but directly to seek the overthrow of the existing Government. Authority must have the patience of Job to undergo the daily attacks, taunts, and threats launched at its head. The *Ami du Peuple,* for instance, of the lamented citizen Jean Paul Marat, that "remarkablest dog-leech," used in the early days of the French Revolution to cry out incessantly for "two hundred and sixty thousand heads," and five hundred bravos armed with Spanish stilettos and a muff on the left arm to traverse France and murder aristocrats; but the *Ami du Peuple* was, until the Jacobins came into power, thought too strong even for the French Revolution; and the "remarkablest dog-leech" was fain to lie perdu, and publish his

incendiary stuff in cellars. Modern demagoguism, however, always quoting England as an exemplar, claims the right to preach the doctrine of Fire, Famine, and Slaughter without interference, as though it were some *Journal des Mères de Famille.* Have you read that so much-vaunted *Propos de Labienus?* It contains matter that no defunct *Satirist,* that no suppressed *Sam Sly* or *Paul Pry,* would have dared to print. Have you heard of *Les Nuits de St. Cloud,* which the bookstall vendors of Brussels and Frankfort vend with such glee? In England it would be thought too bad for Holywell Street, and just fit for prosecution under Lord Campbell's Act. When the gentlemen who indite this journalism, after the style of Peter Aretin, get into trouble, or prison, or are forced to fly their country, they are styled "martyrs," and the continental press is declared to be hopelessly enslaved.

The whole philosophy of the matter resolves itself, to me, into the gist of a remark I heard once from a high French functionary at Algiers. "You English journalists," he said, "seem to say what you like about politics." "We do, Sir," I replied. "Ours," the functionary continued, "are not suffered to say what they like. With you everybody is agreed as to certain fundamental principles. With us everybody is not. No English newspaper demands that 'the last of the Stuarts'—wherever he may be—shall be invited to occupy the throne occupied by the House of Brunswick. Had we entire political liberty, for fifty French papers

you would have the claims of fifty pretenders advocated. *Voilà la chose.*"

And this is very nearly *la chose*, too, in Madrid. Not practices but principles are attacked; not measures but men are denounced. No institution is held to be settled, and all are indiscriminately abused or conspired against. Well-informed Spaniards admit the evil, but plead in extenuation that their modern press is so very young; it is barely thirty years old. This is a plea which will hold water; for Spain, one of the oldest countries in point of civilization—Spain, the Phœnician, the Roman, the Gothic, the Moorish—is still, as a member of the European politico-economical family, as young as Lord Amberley. Or, rather, you may liken her to an old worn-out patriarch, whose flesh and bones his sorceress daughter has boiled in a cauldron and who has become young again, but who is yet staggering about in the helplessness of renewed youth, and is not quite certain as to whether he is eighty years of age or eight.

Next to its youth, the most valid excuse I have heard for the exceedingly low tone of the Spanish press is the want of a reading population. It is only politicians who read the Spanish newspapers; the people at large care little about politics. The Madrid journals are rarely seen out of Madrid. The women read nothing at all save their missals and little cheap books full of romantic ballads—stories about saints and their miracles, and rules for expounding dreams

and winning the big prize in the lottery. No political paper, however respectable, can hope to live solely on its circulation, or even on its advertisements. It is thus forced for sheer existence to seek support from a faction, and so become its organ—nay, often of one single political adventurer. It is not an engine, grinding corn for a whole people; it is a mere sword and shield for one bravo. It carries on no great war for the benefit of the community at large; but ever so many petty guerillas for the benefit of the guerilleros, and none else. The Spanish press, in a word, is not more corrupt and factious than the Court, the Chambers, and the Administration, from the Prime Minister's bureau to the humblest desk in the Custom-house, are said to be; but the corruption, let us hope, is more that of a scrofulous child whom skilful doctors may heal, than the hopelessly gangrened decrepitude of a wicked old man.

Only consider what a legacy of vice, weakness, and disease has been left to this poor babe christened "Spanish Constitution" by its profligate forefathers! The Spain of "Gil Blas de Santillane" is not to be wiped out in thirty years. But precisely as in "Gil Blas" you meet with ministers worthy of the pillory, priests who ought to be at the galleys, dueñas as immoral as that abominable old female in *Faust*, and Court ladies as dissolute as they are devout, and, on the other hand, with plenty of honest men—*braves gens*, as the French say—peasants, muleteers, barbers, and

beggars; so in modern Spain, if I am not misinformed, the corruption, happily, is at the top. The scum is uppermost—a scum of gold, and silver, and diamonds; but underneath there is good liquor—the great heart of the people is sound. A little superstitious, a little vainglorious, and very ignorant, the masses may be; but those who know them best declare the working and agricultural classes to be as industrious, laborious, and honest as, to the most casual observer, they are plainly temperate and peaceable.

## CHAPTER V.

### THE BIRTHDAY OF THE PRINCE OF THE ASTURIAS— FÊTE DAYS IN SPAIN.

THE 24th of January was alike the festival of San Ildefonso and the seventh birthday of his Royal Highness the Prince of the Asturias, *tierno Infante*, as the official press call him—tender infant—destined to continue and to complete the grand and glorious work of which the foundations have been laid by his august mamma, *la Reina Huerfana*. Is it not rather late in the day to speak of Doña Isabella de Borbon as an "orphan Queen?" and is not her as august mamma, Queen Christina, still alive, and "incessantly" expected in Madrid—some say for the purpose of speculating in Spanish railways, others hint with the intent of plotting against her daughter? A curious lady, this Christina, erst *Reina Gobernadora*. I knew a gentleman in the West Indies who had been so far honoured as to be in partnership with Christina in some coal mines and in some gasworks. Not uselessly, when she dwelt in the Rue de Courcellet, Paris, did the exiled Majesty sit at the feet of the great stock-jobbing monarch Louis Philippe. Christina's career has been a perpetual game of *hausse* and *baisse*. She is

incessantly on the eve of coming to Madrid until some one in authority writes to her, politely requesting her to stay away; for Ferdinand's tough widow is one of those personages of whose health and prosperity one is, officially, gladder to hear at a distance of a good many hundred or thousand miles than on the spot.

I cannot say that I witnessed any outburst of loyal enthusiasm on the occasion of the anniversary of the heir apparent's birth. The official press sang pæans, as it is wont to do on anniversaries all over the world; but the population did not cry "*Viva!*" I am more and more convinced that the Spaniards are a nation of philosophers of the stoical school. If they are indeed attached to the existing dynasty, they keep their attachment strictly to themselves. Not a hat is lifted, not an acclamation is heard, as the Royal carriages pass through the Puerta del Sol for an afternoon drive on the Paseo. It is in utter silence, I am told, that Isabella Segunda, whose warmth of heart and political inoffensiveness all admit, is received when she appears in public. No one accuses her of cruelty, of faithlessness, or even of arrogance. Only the people don't cheer her. Perhaps the strict etiquette here resembles that preserved at oratorios in England, where it is not the custom to applaud. Only, as we stolid English people stand up when the Hallelujah Chorus is sung, we might expect these courteous Spaniards to lift their hats at least when their Sovereign goes by. But they don't. The loyalty is all there, of course; but it is

latent, subdued—entombed in the recesses of the heart, it may be, as the Holy Coat of Trèves is walled up in the very masonry of the high altar. The time has not come for the brickwork to be knocked away and the solidity of loyal devotion manifested. It is in this manner I have heard the apparent stupidity of the negro race accounted for. Sambo, say the miscegenators, has as much intelligence and as many rational ideas in his head as his white brother, only he is singularly uncommunicative.

There was a grand review held, and the splendid uniforms of the Spanish army were glittering all over the streets; but the gendarmerie, who have been armed for the nonce with muskets as well as sabres, have not ceased to mount guard at all the barracks. The public buildings were brilliantly illuminated at night, but in very few private houses, I am sorry to say, did the windows show that the inmates cared so much as a candle end for the birthnight of the heir to the throne. Who will write a book about Royal and Imperial little boys—those who did and those who did not come into their inheritance? The Queen made her customary munificent gifts to the poor of Madrid. That her Majesty is charitable almost to prodigality no one denies; but her delicate state of health of course prevented the customary receptions and banquets at the Palace. Numbers of grandees, however, called to offer their congratulations; and if official congratulations can confer felicity, the "*tierno*

*Infante*" must be a very happy Royal little boy indeed. The people, seemingly forgetting all about the Prince of the Asturias, remembered with some glee that it was the festival of San Ildefonso.

My edition of the Romish Calendar, which is a Gallican one, has apportioned the 24th of January to Saint Emirance, a lady saint; but there are so many saints and saintesses. At all events, the people "improved the opportunity" by shutting up their shops, putting on their holiday clothes, and doing nothing. The cabs and omnibuses, however, plied; the cafés were thronged; the post and public offices were all open; all of which leads me to the conclusion that the *dia de fiesta*, or at least its too frequent repetition, is an institution tending in Spain toward the limbo of the "has beens." In good sooth, these continual saints' days are but impediments to business and industry, and encouragements to idleness and profligacy. At this time of day who cares anything about San Ildefonso? The number of his mess is lost. He is a worn-out symbol—as worn out as Ash Wednesday; in other words, a sham. Nor do I think that implicit belief in this sanctified fossil reigns very strongly in the hearts of the Madrileños. They put up their shutters, but they kept their shop doors open, and transacted business in a shady manner, as they do in low neighbourhoods in London, for instance, on Sunday mornings. Now, had they implicitly believed in San Ildefonso they would have bolted and barred up their

doors, and rushed off to his church and plumped down on their knees before him.

And if a *fiesta*, why not altogether a *fiesta?* Why should not those poor cab and omnibus drivers, those coffeehouse waiters, those toiling *Gallegos* and street porters have respite from toil, and be allowed their orisons at San Ildefonso's shrine? The *fiesta* is growing feebler and feebler in Spain;—not half so often now do the priests come out with their waxwork and tinsel shows, and without waxwork and tinsel what is a *fiesta?* The Spanish priest buries himself under his monstrous shovel hat, shrouds his mouth and chin in the skirt of his mantle, and gazing with baleful eyes on a materialistic world, passes by gloomily, not without appearance of slinking. Ancient female devotees accost him kindly, and now and then a glittering eye and a ruddy cheek attached to a mantilla nestle beneath the shadow of the shovel hat in the church porch, or by the door of the sacristia; but on a perverse male generation the man in black makes no impression, and he is disconsolate. He has sunk into the smallest of potatoes. What has become of the days when, sometimes three or four times a week, he and his brother dervishes, twenty strong—with their thurifers, acolytes, choirboys, beadles, brawny sacristans with silver maces, which, clubbed, were serviceable for knocking down the irreverent who would not bow the knee—he went forth canopied, mitred, stoled, bannered, gilt, bedizened—wonderful to look upon?

Military bands led the way, loud clanging. Hussars and banners brought up the rear. The mob prostrated themselves, and worshipped Dagon. Now, only two or three times a year—on Corpus Christi, and the like—can he tread the streets triumphant, in elaborate paraphernalia, and astonish the vulgar with paint, gums sweet smelling, and strips of foil paper. His oracles, they are dumb. His confessionals, they are empty boxes, giving but a beggarly account, or only attended by ancient females, snuffy, but devout. Who would care to listen to their wheezy recitals of the piccadilloes of threehalfpence farthing? His light is out. He carries the sacraments to sick men's houses in a timid, back-street-preferring manner; often furtively in a hack-cab. He will not be powerful, the man in black, any more in Spain.

You in England who grumble so sorely, and not without reason, at the rarity of national holidays—"Would you believe it, Good Friday is the only day in the year when I can get the ceiling of my bar-parlour whitewashed?" a worthy licensed victualler said to me once—you who complain that merchants and tradesmen grudge the Saturday half-day, and would be glad to consign the Early Closing Movement to the tomb of all the Capulets—you little know what an obstacle and nuisance these saints' days and holidays had become in Catholic Europe before railways and telegraphs began to undermine Mumbo Jumbo, the black and great. Half the year lay dead as a mortified limb with these

blind ulcers that spotted the calendar; and for all the saints' days, when no work could be done, and no business transacted, there was never a Sabbath. It was a mathematical solecism. The part was greater than the whole. Ferdinand, rebuilder of convents, restorer of the Inquisition, man-milliner to the Virgin, did his best to bring back the *fiestas*, and give to every saint, as to every dog, his day; but the war of independence and the suppression of the monasteries administered to these days of national idleness a partial quietus. As railways progress, and Spain sets about paying her debts, the quietus will be completed.

We have seen how, in Southern Italy, beneath the fostering care of the Bombas, saints' days and idleness flourished. The brigands and the lazzaroni kept their *feste* most religiously; but the chief saints in the Italian calendar being now St. Victor Galantuomo and St. Joseph Garibaldi, the Italians have come to festivalizing a little less and working a little more. Still, it would be foolish to forget that these Southern races must of necessity take more holidays than we of the hard, unyielding North can do. The blessed sun, and an awning to alleviate its heat, and itinerant varlets going about selling oranges and cigaritos, and even glasses of cold water—these make up at least half a *fiesta*. This is mid January, yet I am writing at an open window; the sky turquoise blue; the sun turning my room into a glorious cage of golden bars, and in the Puerta beneath innumerable peripatetic creatures cry-

ing out, "*La fresca! La fresca!*" and "*Cirillos! cirillos!*"—glasses of cold water and cigar lights. The air is musical with the ringing of many mule-bells, the winding of many soldiers' clarions, the plaintive chanting of many ballads, the twanging of many guitars, and those black eyes beneath the mantillas, and those crowded cafés, and *juegos de villar!* "Come out of that," the sun and sky seem to say, "this is St. Everybody's day. Come out; leave your books and newspapers; fling the corner of your mantle over your shoulder; away to the Paseo de Recoletos; away to the Prado, and with a farthing cigarito and a pennyworth of chocolate make yourself a *fiesta*."

This sunniness, cheerfulness, Heaven-sent brightness and joyousness of earthly things—a sunniness which gives even to the Spanish beggar a serenity of countenance which I have often sought for in vain in the face of a Lombard-street banker—is a direct provocative to *fiestas*. "With bread and steel," said the stern French Republican General, "one can get to China." With a little garlic, and a little tobacco, and some cold water, and the sun, the child of the Latin race can make himself a festival as glorious as the opening of an International Exhibition. There are so many incentives, and consummation is so easy. I shall never forget a story told me once of an English tourist pedestrianizing in Sardinia, who, halting one sundown at a very primitive village inn, thought he might make himself somewhat tidier and more comfortable by a good wash. So,

procuring a tub and some hot water, he proceeded as a preliminary measure to wash his feet. It is presumable that the people of the inn had never before seen an Englishman, if, indeed, anybody, taking a foot-bath; at all events, heads were popped in at the door; curious eyes peeped through the windows; shrill exclamations, seemingly feminine, of "*Santa Maria purissima!*" were heard. The thing got noised abroad. It was spoken of at the fountain. The brigadier of gendarmerie twirled his moustachios, and determined to ask the *forestiero* for his passport so soon as his feet were dry. But the population were pleased. Merry groups saluted the Englishman as, washed and combed, he came from his toilette. A song in honour of him was improvised. It was a most glorious sunset. Suddenly there was a cry of "*Una festa! Una festa!*" Never was a festival sooner gotten up. Tables and benches were heaped in a corner, and the population began to dance. I believe they kissed the Englishman, and that he "stood" penn'orths of wine all round. They brought out the oldest man in the village, set him in an arm chair, and crowned him with flowers. The *cura* came out of his house and blessed them. Somebody bought a squib and let it off. It was fairy land. It was patriarchal. The golden age had come again.

## CHAPTER VI.

THE "CONGRESSO DE LOS DIPUTADOS"—SELF-GLORIFICATION OF THE SPANIARDS—ASPECT OF THE LEGISLATIVE CHAMBER—A DEBATE ON THE POPE AND HIS WRONGS —NEO-CATHOLICISM.

IN a certain British colony, which, for reasons both colonial and imperial, shall be nameless, a friend of mine was once taken to see the halls of the local legislature. Parliament was in full session; the Ministry and the Opposition mustered strong; the shorthand writers were busily plying their pencils; and the strangers' gallery was full. The debate happened to be exciting and important. The honourable gentleman at the head of the Administration had defended the policy of Government in the most impassioned manner, thumping a red box on the table with approved Treasury Bench vehemence. Then up rose the leader of the Opposition, who, withering the Cabinet with one Parthian glance, delivered himself of this remarkable exordium, "Mr. Speaker, I say—look here!" The performances concluded with a grand division, in which two or three members were locked out of the lobby, precisely as though they had been at St. Stephen's. The legislator

who had inducted my friend to the assembly asked him whether he did not think it very Parliamentary and very British. But the questioned was one who had seen many and had come to doubt most things. "Yes," he replied, scratching his temporal bone with one finger, in the Cæsarean fashion; "*it's very nice, certainly; but don't you think it's rather too much like the Judge and Jury Society?*"

I suppose most men have set up a standard of excellence in their own minds from which they measure all things, as we were wont to do from the standard at Cornhill and the Winchester bushel. That standard is usually close to a man's own door, at the end of his nose, or the end of his garden; but is certainly not farther off than the boundaries of his parish. We sneer at the Madrileños when they call Madrid the "only court," and say that when she speaks all the world should hold its tongue. Are they, after all, more ridiculous than the heralds who used to mount the walls of Samarcand at high noon, blast upon their trumpets, and proclaim that the Emperor of the Tartars having dined, the rest of the universe might go to dinner? *Their* standard of excellence and supremacy was at Samarcand, just as that of the Parisians is at Paris, and ours in London. "You never see really green grass or green lanes out of England," a fellow-countryman has often remarked to me; and his assertion will, I doubt not, be echoed by thousands. I venture to remark that in Andalusia, in Spain, I have seen

over and over again such expanses of rich, vivid, velvet, emerald verdure as might cause envy to arise in the heart of a Kentish country gentleman. The time to observe green fields and green lanes in Spain—for there are lanes, too, though the hedges be of cactus and aloe—is in early spring. English tourists usually come abroad in late summer or autumn, and finding the verdant green parched into russet brown by the sun, go home to declare that green is a colour unknown in Iberian landscape.

But what good is there in arguing? You may argue your head off, indeed, and to no purpose. Not one jot of the standard of excellence we have set up shall be abated. I read the other day in a Scotch review that some petty seashore town in North Britain—Moffat, I think it was called—was the "Queen of British watering-places." I never went myself to any British watering-place save Brighton, so that my standard is on the Steyne, and my queen lives on the King's Road; but I have heard the proud title of bathing royalty claimed by Eastbourne, by Lytham, by Sandwich, by Southsea, and by Poulton-le-Sands. They are all right, of course, as right as others are, or any one can be about anything. We have our standard and swear by it. Faith in its superlativeness is felicity. The wretched little hamlet of St. Jean de Luz, for the reason that three crowned heads once met within its walls to squabble about a treaty, calls itself to this day the "Town of the Kings;" and the village of Crawley,

you will recollect, after Queen Bess had once slept there, was always known as Queen's Crawley. I have been "over the water," and other waters some thousand miles in width, since then, and have offended other devotees of their own particular standard of excellence more deeply. I dare say Rouse's Point thinks itself the "only court." Schenectady, I have no doubt, is firmly convinced that the world has no right to dine until she has had her pork and beans. A Lancashire gentleman gravely informed me that that colossal pile of dinginess, dismalness, and ugliness, Manchester, was a "city of palaces." Well, it may have looked like one to him. There are few more pleasant things to regard than when a man married to a palpably ugly lady tells you that he was at a party the evening before, and that his wife was admitted to be the prettiest woman in the room. He believes, and is happy.

We may be vastly severe upon prejudice and vanity; but vanity and prejudice make up, in the abstract, what is called PATRIOTISM. There is no nation more patriotic than the Spaniards. They hold all other countries but their own to be infinitely beneath contempt; and by the expulsion of two million foreigners, Jews and Moors, more than two centuries ago, they irretrievably ruined themselves. The Frenchman has "*Honneur et Patrie*" on the Cross of the Legion. He calls his "*Patrie*" his mother, and will die in her defence. He believes France to be the grandest and most beautiful country in the world. How many allusions do we read in French

speeches to the "sacred soil of France." Why is it sacred? Why is the land of the Muscovite called by Muscovites "holy Russia?" I went once, in Mexico, to a city full of thieves, among whose lower classes almost every one who was not a highwayman was a receiver of stolen goods. This abode of rascaldom was called Puebla "*de los angelos*" (Puebla of the angels); and there was a very well authenticated legend extant relating how the contractor who built the cathedral having become bankrupt before it was finished—not an isolated case in the chronicles of building contracts—the angels in heaven kindly came down and completed about two hundred feet in height of the cupola for him in a single night. So proud were the Pueblanos of their angelic connections, that they assumed everybody else to be of demoniacal extraction; and, until quite recently, were in the habit, when the diligence from Mexico passed through their city, of hurling sharp stones at the heads of any passengers imprudent enough to look out at the windows. For, if we are angels, we are clearly bound to behave ourselves as such.

These thoughts, and a good many more cognate reflections, came into my head as I sat in one of the reserved tribunes of the Spanish House of Commons. The leading politicians of Spain speak very distinctly and sonorously, and it is easier for a foreigner, although comparatively new to their tongue, to understand their eloquence than to follow the wonderful mumblings and gaspings of some preachers of sermons, lay and clerical,

at home; or, especially, to make out the meaning of some distinguished barristers in the English Court of Queen's Bench when a point of law is being argued—speakers whose diction is a confused medley jargon of defunct plaintiffs, mythical defendants, slurred quotations, hemings, hawings, "asides" to the solicitors engaged in the case, undertone remarks to their juniors, and interminable "m'luds" and "y'rludsh'ps." I could make out pretty well what the honourable *diputados* were saying; and as orator after orator arose, I scarcely ever failed to mark that he began or ended his speech by asserting that Spain was a great, noble, and patriotic nation, and that she was the envy of foreigners, from whom she had extorted recognition as one of the great European Powers. He rarely, also, omitted to mention that Spain was the only really Catholic country in Christendom; and that on Spain, at that particular moment, the eyes of the world were fixed. This was before he began to accuse the honourable *diputados* opposite of perfidy, perjury, and the most shameless corruption.

Where, I asked myself, had I last heard these grandiloquent assertions of superiority to the rest of humanity, followed by denunciations of the particular section of humanity in the honourable gentleman's vicinity? I think it was in the comfortable tribune apportioned to the public in the Senate House of the United States at Washington. If not there, it must have been in the narrow and stifling strangers' gallery

in the House of Commons at Westminster. It may have been in the Corps Législatif at Paris. It has not yet been my fortune to assist at a sederunt of Comanche chiefs, or a palaver of African savages, presided over by a king wearing a cocked hat, an accordion, a bottle of rum, and nothing else; but in the south-western prairies, as in the wilds of Borrioboola Gha, I should certainly expect, so soon as I had mastered the delicacies of the natural idiom, to find the Comanches cried up as the only tribe favoured by the Great Spirit, or to hear that the Borrioboola Ghaians had been enabled to kill, slay, and eat up their neighbours, the Big Banjorites, through the special interposition of Mumbo-Jumbo, and that, on the whole, the eyes of the world, black and white, were fixed on Borrioboola Gha.

I am in Spain, where there is perhaps more subdivision of self-glorification than in other countries, and where the Sevillano, with his "*Quien no ha vista Sevilla no ha vista maravilla,*" is capped by his rival of the Alhambra with "*Quien no ha vista Granada no ha vista nada.*" (Unless you have beheld the one you have not beheld a marvel; unless you have seen the other you have seen nothing at all). Adjacent Cadiz then proclaims herself queen city of the Atlantic, and turns up her nose at Perez de la Frontera, which sneers back in return, and laughs Port St. Mary's to scorn. I dare say Malaga thinks no small grapes of itself, and would not give a fig for Valentia, which, utterly spurning Mercia and Tarragona, believes that Barcelona has no

reason to be quite so much "nuts" on itself. "We have the biggest theatre in the world," shrieks the Capitania General of Cataluña. "You hav'n't," growls La Scala, at Milan; "we have." "Not a bit of it," yells San Carlo at Naples; "I am biggest; you are all sons of dogs." The Great Theatre at Moscow contemptuously sums up, "I am bigger than any of you."

One would seem to be listening to some critic of the county Palatine discriminating between Manchester "men" and Liverpool "gentlemen," or some military connoisseur awarding the palm of crack championship to the Rifle Brigade over the 60th Rifles. Granada against Seville, Liverpool against Manchester, Rifle Brigade against 60th Rifles—it is only so much patriotism—that is to say, so much prejudice and conceit—that are in conflict. We are all Roman citizens; only, the bigger and stronger we are, the more effectually we are enabled to make our imperial privileges felt. The Austrian Kaiser is Cæsar, and so is the Russian Tsar. There are at least four European sovereigns who call themselves Kings of Jerusalem, and the meanest German and Flemish towns engrave the S.P.Q. on their escutcheons. And how many five-farthing princelets have styled themselves "*Semper Augustus*"?

From the reserved tribune let us take a physical as well as a moral glimpse at the Spanish Commons. The *Congreso de los Diputados*, it must be admitted, are housed in a comfortable and even elegant manner. They are, in this respect, much better off than the

Upper Chamber of the Cortes, the Senate, who are bestowed in a small and inconvenient edifice at a considerable distance from the Deputies. The Palace of the Commons was built about fifteen years since, or rather completed, for it had been commenced ten years before, and is avowedly on the model of the Parisian Palace Bourbon, now the Corps Législatif. There is a very showy façade with a triangular pediment filled with sculpture representing Spain receiving Law, accompanied by Power and Justice. The presence of Power I can understand; but Law and Justice, if well-informed Spaniards are to be credited, have hitherto shown rather by their absence from the national Tertulia. Perhaps they understood the invitation as a well-bred stranger understands the Spaniard who tells him that his house and all within it are "at his entire disposal." He knows that his more than Barmecide host means nothing whatever of the kind, and takes his measures accordingly. So Law and Justice may have been asked, but didn't come. Their *alto rilievo* presentments are on the tympanum, notwithstanding.

The steps leading to the portico are guarded by two most aggressive-looking lions. The nose of one was injured by a cannon-ball in the *pronunciamiento* of 1854. However, nobody enters the *Congreso* by the portico. The real entrance, like that to a Dutch dwelling-house, is by a back door in another street. You make your way into a plain vestibule, very much resembling the hall-porter's lodge at Covent Garden Theatre, save that

the swing door of crimson baize is guarded by a janitor with gold lace on the collar and cuffs of his coat, and that there is a waiting-room at the side, comfortably provided with stuffed benches, on which numbers of cloudy *caballeros,* muffled in the inevitable cloak, sit undisturbed for hours, mooning and smoking. No policeman bids them move on. No harsh voice commands them to put their cigars out. I don't know who or what they are — *pretendientes, cesantes,* or *empleados;* but there they sit and smoke and moon, and are, I hope, quite happy. It was my misfortune to bring from England a very soft, roomy Inverness cape, purchased during a flying visit to Scotland last autumn. The agonies I have undergone in resisting the temptation to fling the upper portion of that Inverness cape over my right shoulder, sit down on the nearest bench, light a *papelito,* and moon for the rest of my life, are and shall for the present remain untold. *Mañana,* I may describe my struggles against the prevailing Spanish disease.

Through the kindness of a member of the *Congreso,* who, although a Duke and Grandee of Spain, and with hereditary right to sit in the Senate, was serving his country as a Deputy in order not to waste his time until he should be of the full age requisite for admission to the Upper House, I was enabled not only to listen to the debates, but to view all the internal arrangements of the legislative palace. A witty English politician once described the House of Commons

as the most comfortable club in London; but he neglected to mention that the entrance fee and subscription thereto—paid in the lump on the hustings—were shamefully extravagant. The Madrid *Congreso* is very like an elegant London club; not such a gigantic one as the Carlton and the Reform, but a quiet, refined club, such as the Wyndham or the Travellers'. The lobbies are small, but airy, and delicately carpeted. The prettiest of pictures, golden frames, and silken hangings, decorate the walls. There is a consulting room for members, ex-members, and their friends, remarkably like a club drawing-room, and where, I was told, much of the real political business of the country is transacted.

In this apartment numerous political notabilities were pointed out to me. It would be surplusage to mention their names. In England they would be no more notabilities than Mr. Pope Hennessy or Mr. Darby Griffith would be in Spain. Here is the great neo-Catholic, Señor Nocedal. *Et après*—you know no more about him than Spain knows about Mr. Whalley. It is not given to all politicians to be famous all over the world like "Sir Peel," Bockhum Dolff, with his hat, and the Marquis de Boissy. Stay, here is one Spanish statesman of whom we all have heard. He is in familiar converse with a colleague of the Ministry. He is a tall, erect, elderly, soldier-like gentleman, with somewhat of a sternness in his face, and yet somewhat of a frank and even humorous expression about his eye.

He is grey-headed, has a close and military moustache, is "otherwise clean shaven," and is clad in plain citizen's dress. This is Don Leopoldo O'Donnell, some time Conde de Bisbal, and now Duke of Tetuan. They say that O'Donnell, for all his United Kingdom origin, speaks no English and dislikes England. Blake, and O'Donuju, and O'Reilly, those other Iberianised Irishmen, are said to have held our tongue and us in equal disfavour. It was our own fault. We drove them out of Ireland with curses and penal laws; we surely could not expect blessings from their descendants.

The members of Congress, three hundred and odd, sit on benches and in a raised amphitheatre, or semicircle. They have comfortable reading-desks, blotting-pads, paper-knives, as in the American Senate, and servitors in livery glide in and out and between the ranges of seats with cards and messages from clients or adherents in the lobby. The members speak from their seats, but official documents are read from a tribune occupying a stage between the president's chair, which is immediately in front of the throne, and the table occupied by the stenographers or shorthand writers of the official *Gazette*. The ceiling of the chamber is very well painted in *tempera*, and there are compartments on the walls containing some fairly executed historical pictures by Spanish artists. In the centre of the amphitheatre the public have a gallery, which is generally thronged. The reserved tribunes at the side are magnificent private boxes supported on Corinthian

columns, and hung with rich draperies of crimson velvet and gold. Here, lounging in an ample velvet fauteuil, you find listening to a debate, even if it be on neo-Catholicism, a very tolerable process.

The entire aspect of the chamber is very like that of the French Deputies, only the members are not clad in livery like their Parisian *confrères*, but wear the attire of private gentlemen; and the Treasury bench, called the Banco Azul, is of blue morocco, with the Royal escutcheon of Spain embroidered thereupon. The floor of the house is sumptuously carpeted, the pattern showing the Spanish colours, and the Pillars of Hercules, with "plus ultra," on a colossal scale, and on either side the throne stands, mute and immobile, a kind of Spanish beefeater or *alabardero*—a wonderful creature in an antique doublet and trunk-hose, a ruff round his neck, and a huge white plume in his cap. He bears a shining silver mace, and there he stands, statuesque, for the space of one hour, when he is relieved by another macebearer, as silent and immobile as he. How much would the reader, a rational being with a sense of the ridiculous, take to stand for an hour every afternoon at the top of a flight of steps, with a silver poker in his hand, and frill round his neck, and the Pillars of Hercules with "plus ultra" expensively embroidered in gold and colours on his stomach?

I listened to the debate in the Spanish Commons for just two hours, and I heard perhaps a dozen speakers, and twelve times that number of complimentary allu-

sions to the grandeur, splendour, and orthodox Catholicity of the country. The discussion was about the Pope, and the general opinion seemed to be that, out of Spain, the much-suffering old Romish gentleman in question had been most infamously treated. Whenever an orator came to describe the truculent wickedness of the excommunicated King of Italy and the Satanic perfidy of the Emperor Napoleon—who, the reader will remember, is the direct successor of Herod of Jewry—an ecclesiastical gentleman who occupied the fauteuil in front of mine gently wagged his head, and pressed his large fat palms together in silent applause. I had taken him at first for a lay gentleman, for he was buttoned up to the throat in a very secular-looking paletôt; but after an unavoidably close inspection of the summit of his cranium, I found a small circular patch neatly shaven there. It could not be ringworm; it was the clerical tonsure.

The approval which he manifested at the present neo-Catholicity of the speaker below was seemingly shared by a very dandified and handsome young guardsman by his side. I have already remarked that the Spanish warrior is very comely to look upon. What the pay of the garrison at Madrid may be I don't know; but the officers of the crack regiments certainly spare no expense in the way of shiny boots, white kid gloves, and astringent pomatum for their moustaches. These, added to the gifts of which Nature has been so bountiful and to a really handsome and becoming uniform,

cause the youthful defender of Isabel Segunda to assume a radiant and glorified appearance.

The exhibition, let me confess, was, on the whole, tiresome. The truth may have been that I had heard all about that intolerable old man at the Quirinal and his wrongs, and about the spoliation of St. Peter's patrimony—St. Peter! good man, who was never worth anything more than a cast of nets and a hook or two—about the excommunicated king, who seems to have thriven wonderfully under the maledictions of Rome, and about the Emperor Napoleon, and over and over again until nausea came. It is not only that Pio Nono is the persecuted vicar and successor of the Apostles, &c. &c. &c., but he and his have now become the greatest bore in Christendom. He should go and live in Schleswig-Holstein; the Maëlstrom should swallow them both up, and we should be rid of both nuisances together. It was while the neo-Catholic gentleman on the left was replying to the Moderado gentleman in the centre, that I fell into the train of thought to which I have given expression above. Nor could I help musing on the strange spectacle of the dandy guardsman joining with the priest in applauding ultramontane doctrines. I don't think Monseigneur Dupanloup can number many of the Cent Gardes among his proselytes; nor would one expect to find Captain Fitzbackniece of the Blues sitting under Dr. M'Neill at an Exeter Hall meeting.

But neo-Catholicity, they tell me, is the fashionable

creed just now in Madrid. It is a new version of Romanism, and means "Old Priestcraft writ large." The *curas* and *frayles* know that the Spanish world will never go back to the good old times of fire and faggots, hair shirts, spiked girdles, scourges, and winking pictures; so they have invented neo-Catholicism, which is to be a civilized, scientific, quasi-progressista edition of the Scarlet Woman. Saints, with their heads under their arms, are to be mixed up with locomotive engines, and the electric telegraph, popular science, and the Romish martyrology are to go hand-in-hand. The scheme is an ingenious one, but I doubt its success in Spain, or anywhere else. In the present mixed and confused state of every kind of opinion in Spain, this neo-Catholicity has a fitful, jurymast kind of existence. There are a great many Spaniards who, having thrown off the old religion in sheer disgust, have neglected to provide themselves with another. They will not become Protestants, for Protestantism is the creed of a people of whom they are vaguely shy and jealous, and whom, so long as we hold Gibraltar, they must dislike. They do not become Voltairean. They have not the requisite amount of mental cultivation; and, besides, Voltairism is essentially French, and for the Frenchman every Spaniard not an *afrancesado* has an intense and lively hatred. Liberal religious opinions are distasteful to the aristocratic and fashionable classes, as being those of the advanced Progressistas and Republicans.

Neo-Catholicism is genteel, favoured in high places, and has a new-fangled name, which goes a great way in this dry and monotonous epoch. One would like to turn neo-something or another in England before one gave out. Hence, then, there is a good deal of "Old Priestcraft writ small" snuggling and lurking about Madrid. The men in black with the shovel hats chuckle over it, and indulge in hopes that it may so prosper as to be one day writ large again—as large as when it was read by the light of Torquemada's fires; but that day will never, never come. Prophecy—theological, political, or sporting—is, as Dr. Cumming should know by this time, one of the most hazardous of callings; but there is one horse whom it is quite safe *not* to back, whatever the professor of "tips" may say to the contrary. Be sure you bet against the big black horse, "Jack Priest," in Spain and all over the world. He is a specious animal, but he will never reach the post. His back is broken, and his race is run.

## CHAPTER VII.

THE "PUERTA DEL SOL"—ITS NINE STREETS—ITS ARCHITECTURAL CHARACTERISTICS—THE GHOST OF THE "PUERTA DEL SOL."

THE Puerta del Sol is the heart of Madrid. Nine great thoroughfares run from it, as arteries from the heart of man, and convey the life-stream into the smaller veins. The Prado and the Retiro send the blood back again, and the circulation is kept up briskly. The Puerta del Sol has its right and left ventricles and its *aorta ascendens*—leading to the Real Palacio, where Isabella Segunda dwells. I am sorry, for the sake of a simile I shall lose, that there are nine streets branching from this great central point; otherwise the Puerta del Sol might be compared to a splendid edition, much enlarged, and with picturesque illustrations, of Seven Dials. Nor would the simile be so very farfetched. As there are no seven dials *in* the Dials, and indeed no clock at all, save the one in the façade of the public-house, so is there not a vestige of a gate in the Puerta del Sol. If one ever reared its head here, it must have been carried off by a Vandal conqueror, as the gates of Somnauth were by Lord Ellenborough. According to

some authorities, the *Puerta*, which now occupies the exact centre of the city, once formed its south-east extremity, and there was really a gate on which the sun shone every morning, according to the "mathematical calculation" of an illustrious authority in that case made and provided. But if that *Puerta* ever existed, which is more than doubtful, its site, I fancy, must have been the one now occupied by the Fonda de los Principes, where I now abide.

I "take in the sun" with a vengeance. With commendable regularity the great luminary appears every morning at twenty minutes past eight o'clock, over the cupola of the telegraph tower erected some years since, mainly with a view to "rigging" the money market, in virtue of a convention between Louis Philippe and Queen Christina, and darts his piercing rays on to my hearth. "*La royauté allonge le bras pour atteindre les coupables*," wrote Fléchir of the "Grand jours d'Auvergne." The sun has stronger limbs than the Grand Monarque. He stretches out his bright right arm and puts my fire out. Pray do not think this hearthstone question an unimportant one. Fuel, whether I burn it or not, stands me in about thirty shillings a week. I am, like Ancient Pistol, "a woodmonger," and "buy nothing but cudgels" or logs; but I have to find the groats, or the reals, to heal my pate myself. I am much envied by the society at the *table d'hôte* for possessing a room with a fireplace. Better men have had to put up with a barn and a *brasero*, or pan full of live

charcoal in the middle of it. It was but the other day I was grumbling against the Dutch and German stoves, and sighing for an open *foyer*, with its firedogs and pile of blazing logs. "Who has not his hobby, or, having it, is satisfied?" I have got my desire now; but the logs wont blaze under a shilling an hour; and I am fearful of the consequences which might supervene were I to break up the chest of drawers for firewood. To tend the fire, to coax and fan the sulky billets into a genial glow, to feed the lambent flickering flame with chips, shavings, faggots, newspapers, and old love letters—these cares will at least keep a denizen of a room in Madrid, and in winter time, from idleness. It is calculated that lithographic artists lose at least half the time at their disposal in cutting their chalk to a suitable point. I tremble to reflect upon the number of hours I lose every week in efforts to keep the fire going; on the lengthened period I am compelled to pass in blowing the bellows.

Setting aside the "Gate of the Sun" hypothesis, another set of authorities have written bulky folios to prove that the *Puerta* derives its name from a chapel which once stood on the place now occupied by a fountain of the Trafalgar Square kind—a mere pond, with a squirt in the middle—and above whose portal a representation of the sun was painted. From this one might be entitled to assume that the Madrileños were once all Ghebers and accepted the gospel according to Zoroaster. Madrid is, as you know, or rather as the Spaniards

declare, a city of fabulous antiquity. The flippant and sneering French aver that it owed its existence to the will of Philip II., and that nobody ever heard of it before the commencement of the seventeenth century; but the native archæologists maintain, in the teeth of Gallic sceptics, that Madrid was founded "shortly after the deluge," and is at least ten centuries older than old Rome.

As an irrefragable proof of this, it is stated that some years since a stone, having the image of a serpent sculptured upon it, was dug from the foundations of La Puerta de la Culebra. Now a serpent was the favourite emblem of the Greeks: *ergo*, in the time of Cadmus Madrid was already a flourishing city. Next to the celebrated brick from the chimney of Jack Cade's house, and Dr. Cumming's derivation of "church," this is perhaps the most conclusive argument ever put forth. Again, when the Arco de Santa Maria was pulled down, a metal plate was discovered inscribed with characters which nobody could understand. The Spanish antiquary Don Juan Lopez de Hoya has inferred that the cabalistic characters were Chaldean, and that the arch of Santa Maria was constructed by Nebuchadnezzar, King of Babylon, to commemorate his residence *in esta corte*—the lofty term used by all true Spaniards when mentioning Madrid. I don't know in what museum this "metal plate" is preserved, but it would be certainly queer were some English F.S.A., dexterously

taking a rubbing of it with heelball, to discover simply the words "Bill Stumps, his mark," cut with idle jack-knife on a saucepan-lid by some old dragoon in Wellington's army, or some older pigtailed grenadier who came to Spain with Peterborough.

There are other historians who recognize in Madrid the Mantua of the Carpetani, mentioned by Ptolemy in his Tables; others who declare it to be the Miacum of the Romans. You may find all these matters sententiously set forth in the calendar and almanac yearly published under the authority of the Government, in which the year of grace 1866 is made to correspond with the year 4034 of the foundation of Madrid. Why not? Was not St. Paul's a temple of Diana once? Did not our George II. claim to be descended from Odin, and find heralds complaisant enough to blazon the stupid lie on his tree genealogical? Remote antiquity is a mystery in which all humanity may claim to have a part. There is no use in saying you are worth a hundred and fifty thousand pounds when everybody knows that you are not worth twopence; but stoutly assert that you are descended from King Sennacherib, and who is to gainsay you? "This house must have belonged to a very old family," once observed a Yankee who was in treaty for a mansion in Virginia, the walls of which were decorated with sundry portraits of bygone "old dominion" dignitaries in wigs and gowns. "Old!" repeated, with a screech of ostentation, the negro housekeeper, "old, Mas'r, *they'se awful!*" The antiquity of

Madrid is awful. It would be cruel to disturb it with scepticism.

Ptolemy, Cadmus, and Nebuchadnezzar notwithstanding, the houses which surround the Puerta del Sol might have been built the day before yesterday. They belong to no particular order of architecture, save that very simple style which is comprised in running up huge blocks of masonry four or five stories high, piercing them with innumerable windows, putting before every window a balcony, and covering every vacant inch of wall up to the sky line with the sign-boards and showboards of photographers, tailors, milliners, and innkeepers. But these characteristics are common to the boulevards of Sebastopol and Magenta as well as to the Puerta del Sol, and, looking from your window on the buildings which surround you, there is absolutely nothing to proclaim that you are in Spain. Many of the showboards even bear French inscriptions; and one of the sides of a monstrous café between the Calle de Alcala—the Regent Street—and the Carrera de San Geronimo—the Bond Street, of Madrid—proclaims itself to be, in gilt letters a foot long, "The Imperial Great British Coffee House."

The shape of the Puerta del Sol is that of an irregular half-moon. I thought once of comparing it to Lansdowne Crescent, Bath, with one side of Charing Cross occupying the chord of the arc; but I have never returned from a bird's-eye view visit to my balcony without being reminded more and more forcibly of

Seven Dials *in excelsis*. A clean Seven Dials, mind — a stately, a sumptuous Seven Dials — a Seven Dials, I hope, full of honest men, all *muy caballeros* of exquisite nicety of punctilio as to the *pundonor*, and not of tramps and drabs and thieves, as our unhappy Dials are. In Mexico every one who does not make a profession of robbing the stage-coach is styled "*un hombre de buenas morales*," and "men of good morals" are, I am sure, abundant in cognate Spain, and especially in the Puerta del Sol. Who else, for instance, can be resident in that enormous Casa de Gobernacion—the Ministry of the Interior—opposite?

The sun sometimes shines brightly on the dingy misery of our Seven Dials. There is sometimes a blue sky and a clear atmosphere, and, say on a fine spring Sunday morning, when the church bells are ringing, you may come upon groups crossing the Dials positively washed, and absolutely well dressed, and not in the least connected with those woful mooners who lean against the posts unkempt and unshorn, waiting in sodden impatience for the gin-shops to open. It is then that the Seven do more closely resemble the Nine which are here on the banks of the waterless Manzanares. Or, better, make your way through the Dials as the shades of evening are falling, and the gas is beginning to glimmer, in a Hansom cab. Consider the tide that flows from so many populous quarters; filtering from Bloomsbury and even far-off Pancras through fetid St. Giles's; through Soho to Regent Street and

the Great West; through Lichfield Street to St. Martin's Lane, the Strand, and the Great East; through Brokers' Row, across Endell Street, to Drury-Lane. The great ones of the earth, riding in their grand coaches, are often quite ignorant of the fact that their coachmen, driving them to balls and operas, take them for a short cut through Seven Dials. If the ground landlord, when the leases of the surrounding houses expire—supposing these hovels to have leases—would only pull the vile place down, and build it up again handsomely and without gin-shops, it might become the Puerta del Sol of London.

Thus, in Madrid—to whichsoever point of the Madrilenian compass you may be bound, whether it be to the Prado, to the Palace, to the Church of our Lady of Atocha, to the Montaña del Principe Pio, to dinner, to the club, to the tertulia—one of the cosy and elegant little broughams which may be hired here for two shillings an hour is sure to take you through the Puerta del Sol. All roads lead to Rome, they say; all streets converge in the Dials—I mean in the Puerta. The golden coach of royalty, the dogcart of the dandy *pollo*, the sparkling chariot of the diplomatist, the brewer's dray, the mule team, and the hearse—all cross each other there. It is at once the Gate of Ivory and the Gate of Horn; all the glittering shams and all the sad realities of Spain meet at the confluence of the Nine Streets. It is the road to the palace and it is the road to the cemetery.

As in Venice, losing your way in one of the narrow little lanes of the Merceria, your spirits revive when, in the midst of the pavement, you see a thread of white marble, and remember that, by following it, you will be sure to reach the Rialto; so, in the crookedest street of Madrid, you may make up your mind that by following patiently the next turning you will eventually gain the Puerta del Sol. It is not to be avoided, not to be blinked, not to be passed on one side by the idlest tourist. There are those who have been a hundred times to Paris, and have never set eyes on the Place Royale, or the Rue Mouffetard. Hundreds of foreigners come to England and know not that there is such a place as Houndsditch. I am a Cockney, born in London in the reign of George IV., and in the neighbourhood of Manchester Square; but I honestly confess that I couldn't find Manchester Square now without asking my way. It is somewhere near Oxford Street, and not a hundred miles from the Edgware Road; that is all I know. But in Madrid the newborn babe, I should think, must know the Puerta del Sol. The way to it is to be found blindfold; indeed, many of its frequenters, as I shall presently show, have no eyes.

This centrality, this fact of its being the focus and life-core of the city, have gained for the Puerta del Sol the prodigious reputation which in all lands it possesses. *No hay sino un Madrid,* the proud Spaniards proclaim; but there is assuredly but one Puerta del

Sol on the earth's surface. Could that assemblage of lofty but tasteless structures be made sentient, it might be astounded at its own celebrity. What has it done to deserve such fame? It presents no contrast of gay colours, no running play of light and shade; even the arched colonnades so distinctive of the *portals* in most Spanish towns, and which may be found in the Plaza Mayor hard by, are wanting here. The windows are shrouded by no mysterious *jalousies*, no coquettishly-striped *marquises*. They are pert and staring, and leer forth invitations from *Zapateros de la Corte* and *Marchandes de Modes*. Were this summer time, when the sun in Madrid becomes not a friend and protector, as he is in February, but a tyrant and a destroyer, those cords you see stretching from the door-lintels to the lamp-posts would support the awnings extended to protect wayfarers from the insufferable glare; but the sun, at this season, is a thing to be basked in, not fled from, and those awnings, always a considerable help towards the picturesque, are lacking. In vain I seek from right to left—in vain I sweep the diverging streets—Alcäla, San Geronimo, Mayor, Arenal, Correos, Carreras, Montera, and the rest—in quest of some morsel of Old Spanish architecture dear to Street or Ruskin—some bit of Prout, or Lewis, or David Roberts. The Puerta del Sol is the wrong place for such a quest.

To me, when it grows late, and the great white moon shines in the midst of the vault, and the fountain,

its jet stilled now, reflects Diana in its basin as though it were that well we all seek with Truth at the bottom —when it grows so late that the lights in the windows are extinguished and the babbling of the newsboys and watersellers below is hushed, and only, perhaps, a solitary guitar twanged in a bye-street makes you dubious as to whether the serenade is still among the things of the present; or some silly British travelling gent, deluded by romance reading, has imagined that to serenade Doña Iñez in her bower is yet "the thing," and is twanging on spec.; or whether, which is likeliest of all, some itinerant ballad-singer is practising in his garret a new *seguidilla*, which, he trusts, may bring him a few reals to-morrow—then, at this witching hour of night, the Puerta del Sol is haunted by a ghost. A soldier-like ghost, a most martial phantom he is. Bright gleams his cuirass, and glistens his gold embroidery, and floats his snow-white plume in the moonlight. Raven black, and tressed into fantastic ringlets, are his hair and beard. There are jewels in his cap and on his sword-hilt, and even on the sumptuous housings of his snorting charger. Round and round the Puerta he prances proudly and defiantly; but, woe is me! he is all one gore of blood. There is blood from the counter to the crupper of his steed—blood on his bright cuirass and broidered doublet—blood on his jewelled cap and sparkling sword-hilt. It is no blood of his own—it is that of the people of Madrid; and from the nine street-corners rise nine

times nine legions of pale ghosts, their shrouds ensanguined, who point at him and gibber, yet flee with a shriek of affright as the bloody hoofs of his horse come clattering towards them.

This is no ghost of the Cid Campeador, of Guzman the Good, of Alonzo the Brave—no, it is the phantom of one who but fifty years since was a living, breathing man, but whose romantic valour made him the paladin of the French army, while his extravagantly theatrical style of apparel caused him to be nicknamed its "Franconi." I see the spectre of Joachim Murat, the Provençal innkeeper's son, sometime Grand Duke of Berg and King of Naples—the *beau sabreur* of the Moskowa, the husband of Caroline Bonaparte, but to all Spaniards a man to be loathed and remembered with curses as the infamous hero of the "*Dos de Mayo*," 1808. On the twenty-third of March in that year, Murat arrived at Madrid as lieutenant for the Emperor Napoleon. For a few weeks he made some efforts to ingratiate himself with the Madrileños; nay, according to some accounts, Murat aspired to the throne of Spain to the detriment of Joseph. He had as good a right to it as that worthy. But who has not been accused of aspiring to the throne of Spain? Even the Duke of Wellington was charged with such an ambition. The Madrileños, however, soon lost their liking for Murat. On the first of May the mob, irritated by the enforced departure of some of the Infantes, hissed Grand Duke Joachim on the Puerta del Sol, and pulled from his

horse a French aide-de-camp who had cut a hissing *gallego* down. A terrible vengeance followed. The poor mooners of the Puerta del Sol fell by hundreds before the sabres of the French cuirassiers and of the Mamelukes—for whose oriental aspect and dress the orthodox Spaniards had a special aversion. They thought the Moors had come again. More appalling massacres took place on the days and nights immediately ensuing, and numbers of the people, tried by military commissions, presided over by General Grouchy, of Waterloo notoriety, were shot on the Prado.

Mr. Ford, in the amusing *mélange* of wit, humour, art criticism, and classical lore which is still, in despite of its high Tory prejudices, one of the most admirable of handbooks, traces the subsequent fate of Murat and Grouchy to the direct action of a Nemesis angered by their atrocities in Spain. Grouchy, it is true, died in his bed, but earned the scorn and hatred of France for not coming up in time at Waterloo; whereas Murat, captured on the Calabrian coast, in 1815, was tried by a "military commission," and shot in virtue of a law which he had himself decreed while King of Naples. Most luckless and yet most fortunate Joachim—spoilt child of Fortune, but whose mother, as the mothers of spoilt children are apt to do, in a moment of ungovernable rage at his naughtiness, beat him to death, to be sorry for it and pamper his descendants in the next generation. The bankrupt, captive, disowned,

doomed *beau sabreur*, with his gay Franconi tunic all besmeared, and his snow-white plume lopped off, had other things, I fear, lying heavy on his soul that sultry summer afternoon when he sat in the Castle of Pizzo eating his last meal of maccaroni and boiled chicken, from which they had taken out the bones lest he should strive to choke himself with them. Fortunate, indeed, if no direr fate awaited him, than to haunt, as in idle fancy I have pictured him, the Puerta del Sol.

## CHAPTER VIII.

THE FOUNTAIN IN THE "PUERTA DEL SOL"—THE WATER OF MADRID—THE "AGUADORES"—"WAITERS AT THE SUN."

I SPOKE anon disrespectfully of the fountain in the Puerta del Sol, likening it to those cascades of ginger-pop in front of our National Gallery. Only, the Puerta "water privilege" is fortunate enough to be without dolphins. The little blackguard boys, who in Madrid are wonderfully sharp, and often wonderfully witty, are not allowed to sail cockboats on the fountain's bosom, or to splash each other with its spray. *Guardias civiles* keep strict watch over it. Now and then a dragoon's horse picketed in the area before the Gobernacion will break loose, make for the fountain, and in deep draughts refresh himself; but in general it is kept sacred from such invaders. The parapet of its circular marble basin is fringed all day long by silent men, muffled to the eyes in cloaks, who there sit and moon. If they are smoking, they refrain from casting the ends of their *papelitos* into the basin. From other pollutions it is safe, for Spaniards rarely expectorate when they smoke. One of the deadliest insults con-

ceivable—an insult worse than the terrible epithets of "*muy puerco*," "*muy cochino*"—is expressed by spitting; and in wanton expectoration the well-bred Spaniard—and every Spaniard is well-bred—might be running the risk of insulting some inoffensive *caballero* who was passing.

I am sorry now that I spoke disrespectfully of the aforesaid fountain. I should not say a word against any fountain, great or small, in Madrid, for they are fountains not so much for ornament as for bounteous, blessed use. The water of Madrid is the most exquisitely delicious that ever mortal tasted since Patriarch Jacob drank at the pitcher of the Hebrew maid, and loved her for the draught. It sparkles, it dances in your glass; not a grain of sediment has it. It raises the spirits like the notes of a fiddle or the prattle of a woman. The Cliquots and Roederers, who make this cream of all champagnes, live up in the high sierras of the Guadarrama yonder. Their brand is that of Nature and Co. We are fed by mountain torrents—ale so pure and good! The rain has been refined and spiritualized in the alembic of the living rock, and bubbles up in all our decanters. For rain which may have fallen on the mountain top thousands of years ago, is the dry Sillery, as torrent water is the Aï mousseux.

Water at Madrid is life, and the Spaniards are the greatest water drinkers, perhaps, in the world. It might be assumed that they learnt the habit, with many

others which have given to Spain the half-opprobrious name of *la Berberia Cristiana*, from the Moors; but orientals, though exceedingly temperate and fair devotees of fountains, are besides great bibbers of coffee and sherbet. The Spaniard, on the contrary, cares for very few beverages besides water. He will take coffee or chocolate as a *desayuno* in the morning; but on that he looks as a meal, and he always takes care to drink a glass of water afterwards. At the opera, when it is very hot, he may take an ice; but it is more for the sake of the glass of water which accompanies it than for that of the *leche helada* itself. Water-bibbing is with him a passion, and almost a religion. You may hear edifying conversations respecting the merits of particular pumps. Folios, I dare say, have been written about the fountains of Spain.

In this country, running red with blood of grapes, where the wine-press scarcely ceases from treading, and the whole sea-coast is one mart of tunning and racking and coopering and exporting, the rarest thing to come across is a glass of sherry. I have dined ten times at the table d'hôte of the first hotel in Madrid, and I have seen one bottle of champagne, and one of Bordeaux, both ordered by strangers. It is for the foreigner, the *extranjero*, indeed, that the grapes bleed, and the wine-presses are trodden. Even the lowest classes are more than moderate in their potations of cheap Val de Peñas and Aguardiente. Watershops are more plentiful than dramshops. There is, I am given

to understand, a strong common red wine called Toro, or *vino de toreros*, supposed to be specially patronized by professionals of the bull-ring; and somewhere in the Carrera San Geronimo there is said to be a shop where for two reals you may take what is called the "Bull-fighter's nip," a bumper of Xerez, pure Manzanilla, dry as the bones of your grandmother and bright as her memory, and a "queen olive"—that is to say, one about the size of a plover's egg. A mouthful for Hercules, ere he sallies forth to vanquish the mares that fed on human flesh. That the bullfighters need their "nips," and are the better for them, I have no doubt; but I have not heard any charges of habitual intemperance made against this dexterous and courageous class of men. They are of low caste, but, as a rule, sober and well-conducted fellows enough.

For the sake of the water which flows in the Puerta del Sol and in a hundred other fountains in Madrid, one might feel inclined to advocate the emigration to and settlement in Castille of Mr. Wilfrid Lawson, Mr. Pope, and other lights of the United Kingdom Alliance. Here they would be at home. Here they would find teetotalism the common rule and practice of life. Here they might fraternize with millions of water-drinking Spaniards, and a deputation from the club—if it be yet extant—of the *Buveurs d'Eau*, established by poor Henri Mürger in Paris. Better to come to this terrestrial paradise of Temperance than to fight fruitlessly with wild beasts at

Ephesus or Exeter Hall. Yet, after all, they might not find content. It is not in mortality to find it, least of all is it discoverable by that peculiar race described in Hudibras as "so perverse and opposite" that they seem, even, to worship Heaven for spite. Ere long the Anglo-Iberian teetotallers might discover that Spanish revolutions, debts, the *mañana* disease, and the Chilian difficulty were all due to the water-drinking habits of the population, and begin to worry the Legislature out of its life to pass a prohibitory or a permissive bill for the conversion of fifteen millions of people into dram-drinkers.

Meanwhile, the mooners of the Puerta del Sol revel in the pure element to their great hearts' joy. Round about the fountain, on all the kerb-stones, at all the *salle* corners, on most of the door-steps, and on the little granite island surrounding the *Farola*, or monumental lamp-post, a strange class of industrials ply their innocent, wholesome trade. These are the water-sellers—not drivers of carts or yoked carriers of buckets for home consumption, like the brawny Auvergnats in old Paris, or those coquettish sluts who flirt and show their small feet and their large hats by that fount of fountains in the courtyard of the Palazzo Ducale, to the left of the Giant's Staircase, at Venice; but vendors of water for drinking *al fresco*. Their stock in trade is very simple indeed. It consists of a *cantaro*, or frame for holding the glasses; half-pint tumblers; a great porous jar full of water, half wrapped in a bit of straw

matting, slung by a stout leathern strap at the back; and a little basket containing one or two lemons or limes, and a few *azucarillos* or biscuits of sugar paste made thin and porous, something like the *panales* which the Cubans dissolve in their iced water. The whole apparatus might probably be purchased second-hand for a shilling. A London bootblack could not set himself up in business so cheaply. These *aguadores* do an immensity of business; for, whether the weather be hot or cold, Madrid is always thirsty. The water-sellers are generally strapping lads, Valencians or Gallicians, wearing the hat with peaked crown and turned-up brim, and occasionally they may be seen in really picturesque costume—galligaskins and gaiters, lambswool jackets, bright sashes, and *alpargatas*, or hempen sandals bordered with blue.

But these, like all other costumes in populous cities, are rapidly disappearing under the all-absorbing tyranny of the cheap tailor. "In this style, seventy-two shillings," has been a greater leveller than Tom Paine; and "sixteen shilling trousers" have given all men their rights, and legs like pairs of tongs, and a generally respectable, prosaic, and intolerable appearance. Is there anything in the whole world more hideous than a pair of trousers? But the reign of the Vandals has come again. It is sufficient to record that the "fly-by-night," or "sauce-box," or "devil's-delight" bonnet—not very indirectly anathematized by the Prophet Amos—the false bonnet which is perched on the back of the false

back hair, is, with the "pork-pie," or "Norfolk-biffin," or "damson cheese" hat, becoming much commoner in the streets of Madrid than the glorious and graceful mantilla. Byron would have gone crazy had he beheld the decadence of the matchless head-dress on which he wrote such enthusiastic stanzas. What say I of "Childe Harold?" *Histoire de rire!* Do you know how the Childe himself dressed? In no romantic doublet or Royal-Academician-imagined turn-down collar did the Right Honourable George Gordon Noel Lord Byron appear in Bond Street, but in a swallow-tailed coat with a collar up to his ears, a starched cravat in sixteen swathed folds, and swinging a bludgeon in his noble hand.

It is idle to talk about costume. I must haste and away to Seville and Granada, for from Madrid it is rapidly disappearing, as from all great towns. Only last Christmas I was horrified in Hamburg to see a "Vierländerinn," that erst chaste and bustleless creature, in a monstrous crinoline, which waggled as she walked. I shall expect when I return to England to meet a "coaley" emerging from the Fox-under-the-Hill—stay, it will have been swept away for the Thames Embankment—in sixteen shilling "pegtops" in lieu of the traditional shorts, cottons, and ankle-jacks. The world is clearly coming to an end. Cuming is the correct card, and chaos imminent.

The water-vendors of the Puerta del Sol are said by Spaniards to be masters of nine hundred variations of

the fundamentally simple announcement that they have cold water to sell. *Agua! agua! quien quiere agua?* are the most audible among their cries. *Agua helada fresquita como la nieve!*—"Freshest water, cold as snow"—is said to be another; but in all languages the street cries are the most difficult to learn, and the easiest to misunderstand. Old English jest-books commemorate the blunder of the Frenchman about "Oars, oars, your honour," at Wapping Old Stairs; and the wags of St. Petersburg are never tired of telling you of the Gallic book-making tourist, who set it down that the Russians were a very murderous people, inasmuch as he heard every morning beneath his window the cry of *L'Assassinat.* He had heard in reality *Na sassina* cried; and the *sassina* is a very succulent fish abounding in the Gulf of Finland.

It is consolatory to remark that the Briton is not the only foreigner laughed at on the Continent. The Frenchman's fashions are copied in Spain; but he himself is ridiculed and hated. It is only "*Un perro o un Frances,*" the people say disdainfully—a dog or a Frenchman, for the words are held to be synonymous,—who will walk on the sunny side of the way in July. For anything absurd, preposterous, or even simply unusual, the explanation "*Es Frances*" is held sufficient. The meanest of flowers, the common-yard crowfoot, is called the "*Francesilla.*" An English lady told me that when she first went to Madrid, wishing to avoid observation in the street, and following the advice volun-

teered in the guide-books, she abandoned her Regent Street bonnet for a Spanish mantilla. However, she had not learned to pin or fold it properly—a whole life's study. When she walked abroad in her mantilla, the first ragged little girl she met nudged her companion, and with a grin, remarked to her, "*Mira la Francesa*"—"Look at the Frenchwoman trying to look like a Spaniard." The little wretch was barefooted, but her tattered hood was disposed round her head with exquisite grace.

Water is not the only thing in which the people delight. "*Vamos al Sol,*" says the Madrileño who has no money in his pouch and no logs on the hearth in his poor dwelling. "*Vamonos!*" acquiesces his brother *decamisado*. They do not link limbs—Spaniards rarely walk arm-in-arm—it is not a dignified mode of locomotion;* but each man wraps himself in his ragged cloak, and the pair, taking the first thoroughfare which offers itself, stalk solemnly onward until they reach the "Sun." The word *Puerta* is sub-understood. The

* Japanese "Tommy," a member of the embassy who were so lionized in New York two years since, was much scandalized at the spectacle of "men rushing through the streets carrying women in their hands." He had merely seen ladies and gentlemen walking arm-in-arm. Next to the "frightfully indelicate practice" of exposing meat "raw and naked" in the markets for sale, this formed the object of the sharpest criticism in Japanese Tommy's satirical work on the manners and customs of the Anglo-Saxon barbarians, published after his return to his native country. There would not be much harm if we studied the works of Japanese Tommy and his contemporaries oftener.

Sun, *el Sol Criador*, is the brazier of the poor of Madrid. Coals, they say, are seven hundred reals a ton; wood is scarce and dear; you cannot burn stones for fuel. Did not Jonathan Swift, in his dotage, break the taciturnity of long years to tell his stupid servant so? The sun, then, supplies the firing for thousands of chilly souls who, from November to March, and when the icy winds blow from the Guadarrama, have but their mantles and their philosophy to keep themselves from congelation. You may regard the Puerta del Sol in winter time as one vast ingle full of many nooks—a generous hearth where, as in the chief priest's house in old Judea, all were free to come and warm themselves for nothing. A dog will bask in the sun, fling up his paws and warm his stomach in its rays; a cat will sit on a coping for hours blinking and dreaming of fat mice.

I have seen, on the Spanish Main, the Kroomen seamen of the mail steamers, when their watch was relieved, fling themselves on the hottest part of the deck, face upwards, go to sleep, and frizzle in the burning beams. But these tattered mantled beings of the Puerta enjoy the sun actively as well as passively. They compare notes about his strength and brightness that day. They chide him gently if his glare of fire be feeble, and murmur "*Mas luz.*" They eat and drink the sun, as it were, gild their rags with him; spread him on their bread in lieu of that butter which, save at the tables of the opulent, is not to be found at

Madrid. The sun to them is brother and sister, hope and felicity—the fulfilment *di quei promessi miracoli chi non vengono mai.* Reckless, scoffing Mirabeau, on his deathbed, bade them open the window, and, looking for the last time upon the sun, cried out if that were not the Deity, it was at least his cousin-germain. And it might be harsh to blame the Spaniard, very poor, and tattered, and hungry, if he had a Parsee corner in his heart, and, bathing in the golden river which flows free for all mankind, prayed to the sun as well as the Virgin. "Don't lock me up, Monsieur le Gendarme," pleads Béranger's beggar; "I am old, I am a cripple, I am dying in a ditch. Don't put me in the dark cell, and rob me of my sole treasure. Old vagabond as I am, *le soleil est à moi*" (the sun is mine).

Long may it be ere the seedy *señores* of the Puerta del Sol are deprived of that which to them is a source of inexhaustible riches. The Indies have taken themselves wings and flown away, and the New World provinces, which were once to Spain as milch cows, have become as roaring bulls of Bashan, butting furiously and goring their venerable but debilitated mamma. But the real wealth of Spain, the sun, no rebellion can take away, no civil war enfeeble. It has been calculated that, off and on, a hundred thousand people—one-third of the population of Madrid—come to take their ration of sunbeams at the Puerta every day. I am a bad judge of numbers, but, so far as I can count heads by approximation, I have never looked from my balcony

upon the place without seeing at least five thousand people scattered in groups, large or small, over the area. Twenty relays would give the gross amount mentioned. When the weather is wet, and the sky overcast, they still come "*al Sol,*" hoping even against hope that he will thrust the clouds aside and shine. Waiting for something is, indeed, the prevailing expression on the countenance of the Madrileño mooner. He is very patient; there is no hurry; but he waits—waits for what? He is Mordecai waiting in the gate of life. He waits for the sun to shine; for Queen Esther to ask him to her *tertulia;* for King Ahasuerus to give him a berth in the Ministerio de la Hacienda; for his petition to be read; for his claim to be allowed; for Haman to be hanged, and himself, the waiter, to be paraded from the Real Palacio to the Fuente Castellana —passing, naturally, through the Puerta del Sol—mounted on "an arrogant mule," and arrayed in a *capa de gala,* as one whom the king delights to honour. He waits for the good time coming, and it will come, that time—*mañana.*

The Spanish name for such a lean and ill-fed "Waiter at the Sun" is a *Pretendiente.* He "pretends" or aspires to procure a place under Government. He is not very particular as to what it is, so long as he gets something. He would take a minister's portfolio, or the captain-generalship of a province, or the command of an iron-clad frigate, or, failing those appointments, a modest post in the custom-house, or the post-office,

or an *Estanco de Tabacos*. It is to him at once a question of a million of reals per annum—don't be alarmed at the figures; the real is only twopence-halfpenny—and of a few *cuartos* a day. He would like very much to have a grand house, many servants, horses, and mules; but he would be also grateful for the situation which would afford him daily bread. Little beyond that, with some smoke and peace, does he want. For how long, I wonder, has he been haunting this Portal of Lost Footsteps! His favourite place is, of course, in the Sun; but he is obliged to cross the road now and then, say a hundred times a day, to the Ministerio de la Gobernacion, to see how his memorial is getting on, to peep in at the doors of ante-chambers, to stalk in a disconsolate manner up and down staircases. At the Gobernacion, appropriately enough, he is in the cold, cold shade. The hulking barrack of a place stands between the Sun and him. His suit proved fruitless; for the five-hundredth time, he hastens back to *al Sol* and confers with other *Pretendientes*, lean and hungry and place-hunting as he is. But I notice that these conversations are not frequent. An equality of misery is apt to make men taciturn. I want, thou wantest, he wants. There is little variety in the gamut. Meet with one very vain and conceited man, and he will talk you deaf about himself; but when two egotists come together they soon become quiet, and depart in moody silence, hating each other.

Observe these *Pretendientes*, parchment-skinned and

lantern-jawed, their eyes bright with expectancy, but the lids of them drooping with the depression of continual disappointment. Mark their infinitely elaborate state of shabby gentility. These are not the *decamisados*, the utterly destitute: they are poorer than the poorest, for they have an appearance to keep up; the cloak, threadbare, frayed at the edges, and white at the seams, has been scrupulously brushed, and one end of the cape has been dexterously thrown over the shoulder, and turned back to display the faded velvet lining. The hat, its cylinder cracked into a tesselated pattern, and long since bereft of nap, has still a double gloss—one given to it by grease, the other due to the application of a wet brush. And they wear gloves, these most awful *Pretendientes*—gloves whose tips show the fingers through, as blanched almonds glitter from a bunch of raisins. Mark these forlorn persons, and do not scorn, but pity them. Their lives are hard. They moon because they have no money. But for that all-sufficing Sun, they must faint outright and die.

## CHAPTER IX.

THE "MINISTERIO DE LA GOBERNACION"—THE ROYAL CARRIAGES—THE SPANIARD A WALKING MUMMY.

I WAS never a *Pretendiente*, although I should not at all object to a snug commissionership, with nothing to do, and twelve hundred a year to get; but I have always had a great liking for looking at the outside of Government offices. The porticoes of the Ministère des Finances under the arches of the Rue de Rivoli in Paris is, for instance, a great study. How comes it that you meet so many ladies there? What have the fair sex to do with finance? What sleek rogue faces —sharp schemers' faces—glum, disappointed faces, you see passing in and out! How some rub their hands and chuckle softly—they have got the Minister in a right place, and had their will of him; how others bite the lip, and set the teeth, and stuff the now useless bundle of papers into the coat-pocket! The Minister has said them nay, and they have received the moral kick downstairs—a process practised to admiration in all public departments.

From the outside of Somerset House, too, you may learn great things. Every variety of beard, turn-down collar, scarf-pin, and watchguard is on view

when the victims of a despotism which reigns from ten till four every day arrive and depart. To inspect the carrying in of lunch at one o'clock—that ceremony is now, I suppose, superseded by a refreshment-room—used to be productive of much philosophic meditation. You wondered whether it was stamps or taxes or audit office who took oysters, and how tithes commissioners could contrive to dispose of two huge mutton chops. And then your eye was arrested by the unmistakable duns who used—I am glad to speak in the past tense—to hang about; the small bill discounter affecting the Strand, while the "horsy"-looking dun and the army-tailor-looking dun more constantly patronized the *alentours* of the Treasury and the War Office. And you thought of the young ladies and gentlemen who found out that the court-yard of Sir William Chambers's huge bureaucratic palace was a capital place for flirtations, and that lover's vows might be conveniently interchanged on the brink of that abyss in the middle, originally intended, I infer, for a fountain, and where there is a colossal statue of an old black man, in reduced circumstances and insufficient apparel, embracing, with signs of the most ardent affection, a pickle-jar of preternatural proportions. I never could make out whether he was meant to represent the Thames and its tributaries, or the Patriarch Noah exulting over the discovery of old port.

To the edifice at home, however, I have been but a casual visitor; here for the first time I live opposite a

Government office, and am thus enabled to study its phases from morning till night.

In the way of interest I consider that the Ministerio de la Gobernacion beats Somerset House and the Ministère des Finances hollow. I have grown to know —from afar off—the heads from the backbones of departments, ay, and the caudal appendages thereof, and can tell a *Pretendiente*, or outsider, from an *Empleado*, or insider, as keenly as a Temple laundress can distinguish between a Bencher and Mr. Briefless. The Gobernacion, I must observe again, is an important military post, as well as the Home Office of Spain. Half of a foot regiment seem to be on guard there; and the easy, contented, smilingly supine look of the warriors off duty—the airy way in which the officers strut up and down, puffing tiny clouds of smoke from their *papelitos*, and ogling anything superior in the way of a mantilla which may happen to pass—I confess puzzles me. How can these gay sons of Mars, the only ones among Spaniards who do not shroud themselves to the eyes in cloaks, and stalk mournfully moonwards, conspire, pronounce, rebel? How do they set about it? Who first impels them to the foul design? At present, the *Guardias civiles* being round the corner, they seem the most loyal troops imaginable.

It is a most pleasing sight to behold the guard turn out and present arms when the royal carriages pass, which they seldom fail to do twice a day. I always have timely notice of the approach of royalty. At

about twenty minutes past three p.m. I hear a flourish of trumpets—a wild Moorish *fanfare*—from the Gobernacion guard-house. The window is open—yes, wide open—on the fourth of February, and I rush into the balcony. There goes royal carriage number one, a stout, handsome, double-bodied vehicle, with red wheels, and crammed full of children. There goes royal carriage number two, also crammed full of children. Why, bless my heart, here is another carriage full to the window sills of Spanish olive branches. Well may the heralds deck the Pillars of Hercules with the proud inscription "*Plus ultra.*" Blessed is the Queen who has her quiver full of them; and what a happy man the King of Spain must be!

When harnessed to these royal carriages you see six mules, you may be certain that not actual regnant royalty, but some of *los Niños*, the Infantes and Infantas, are within. The mules are magnificent, and at the Agricultural Hall, Islington, they would create a prodigious sensation. Plump and sleek, tall and shapely, ears erect, and tails of which they have no reason to be ashamed, they fully merit the epithet of "arrogant," which the Spaniards are so fond of applying to them. Previous to the interesting event which has blessed the Castiles with another "robust Infante," I was honoured on two occasions with a view of her Majesty in person, proceeding for her afternoon's drive. Then, not six mules, but six superb black horses draw the royal carriage—a postilion on the leader. The pace

is a rapid trot, the turn-out exceedingly handsome. The coachman, footmen, and outriders wear long blue cloaks, and gold-laced hats of the "Egham, Staines, and Windsor" pattern; and another retainer, cloaked and cocked-hatted, rides a stately charger between the first and second carriages. This second conveyance, as I hinted in a previous chapter, is, when her Majesty goes abroad, empty. It is the traditional and historical *coche de*——; but I forget its Spanish name—the *carrosse d'en cas* which Père la Chaise and Scarron's widow, the pretty pair, tried to persuade Louis Quatorze in his dotage to set up. But, dotard as he was, the hen-and-raven-pecked old man would not humble himself so far. Whenever the Queen, in her drives about Madrid, meets the procession of the Host, out of her grand coach she gets. Dusty or muddy as the road may be, she alights, and the priest with his pyx is installed in her place. Then the use of the *coche de* —— becomes apparent. I must add that the "in-case-of-need" turn-out is as handsome as the actual coach-royal.

I wonder whether the authorities ever hint to the clergy that when passing with the Sacraments they might as well avoid the Puerta del Sol between the hours of three and five while the Queen is in Madrid. Her Majesty's piety is well known—has she not given every wooden virgin in the kingdom a *trousseau* which a Russian archduchess might envy?—and continually ascending and descending from one coach to another might be productive of some inconvenience. There is,

however, in the whole thing a charmingly curious combination of luxurious ostentation and ascetic self-denial, of religion and stiff-neckedness, and especially of the pride which apes humility. The mystic symbolism which Philip II. professed yet lingers in varnished and Voltairian Madrid. But the reality is lost, the gilt and showy outside only remains.

Ere we quit the Ministry of the Interior, pray take note of the curiously honeycombed and vermiculated appearance which the façade—say to a height of fifteen feet—presents. The spaces between the windows are assiduously placarded with advertisements relating to dentistry, pedicurism, and photography; the *bailes de Mascaras*, or Carnival balls, at the Zarzueta theatre; to new editions of the works of Cervantes; to waxwork shows, or *figueras de cera;* to the next bull-fight; and to the performances of a noted gymnast, who christens himself "Jack Spard." Fancy bill-sticking being permitted on the walls of Sir Charles Barry's sumptuous range of public offices in Whitehall! But between these placards, and above them, and below them, there are spaces, and every inch of wall so discovered presents the pock-marked aspect I have mentioned. Why are the walls so pitted? Why are the gratings in front of the windows—common enough in all Spanish houses —of extra thickness here? Why is the guard-house considered so very important a part of the edifice, that when the French architect, Jacques Marquet, submitted his plan to the Duque de Aranda—a plan in which the

different suites of rooms were reached by means of a grand staircase in the centre of the façade—that impetuous nobleman told him that he must have a guard-house there, and that he might put his staircase wherever he chose? The stairs are accordingly huddled into an obscure corner; and in most English descriptions of Madrid the unlucky Frenchman is taunted with having forgotten the staircase altogether in his original design. Honour to M. Germond de Lavigne, who, in his "Itinerary of Spain," one of the best of the excellent Joanne collection of guide books, has vindicated the memory of his countryman from unjust aspersions. I wait for some English architect to clear the fair fame of our Beazley from the charge of having forgotten the gallery staircase at the Lyceum.

There is, it should be stated, a very simple solution to this enigma of honeycombing and vermiculation on the walls of the Gobernacion. The stone is too sound to have rotted like the wretched stuff—fit only to clean knives and scrub hearths—of which our Houses of Parliament have been built. The mountain air of Madrid is too pure for stone to suffer from atmospheric erosion. As the blocks were hewn by the mason and chiselled by the sculptor, so they remain sharp and firm for hundreds of years. The outward walls of the Gobernacion have merely been pitted by the smallpox of civil war. Thousands of volleys of musketry have been fired at that façade, now peacefully decorated with the placards of corn-cutters and tooth-drawers. Well

might they bar those windows up. An infuriated populace has striven to storm them a hundred times.

For this Puerta del Sol, be it well understood, has been for a century the cockpit of Madrid, and too often a kind of Golgotha. More patriots than ever fell on the Carrousel have been slain here. "I have known the time," a veteran politician said to me, pointing at the soldiers lounging on the guard-room benches, "when five hundred duros, judiciously distributed among those men, would produce a *pronunciamiento*." There have been times, too, when the people, needing no bribes or donatives, but only the quickening spur of passion and the sun, have risen in furious wrath, and beaten against the walls of the Gobernacion, even as the waves lash the base of the Eddystone. Sometimes —not often, luckily—the mooners become a mob, and rend their rulers in pieces.

It is well for the peace of Madrid that the masses almost invariably wear cloaks, and that those cloaks are folded about the body in a manner so complex and elaborate, that violent muscular exertion while enwrapped in these garments is all but impossible. Only one hand is free, to hold—with the pacific, a cigarito; with the naughty, a knife. The rest of the man is a kind of walking mummy, only to be unrolled at night. The Spaniard is, in fact, a tall baby in swaddling clothes. Now a man so muffled up, I take it, cannot easily revolt. Mr. Squeers complained of the difficulty of thrashing a boy in a hackney coach. How rarely

do you find a woman fly into a passion when she has had her hair dressed. It is when she is in *déshabille* that the row takes place. How is a man in a cloak to build a barricade, or fling stones, or carry about the heads of unpopular officials on pikes? The man in a blouse can do these things, and, when he has a chance, he does them. To rebel you must tuck up your sleeves; there is no tucking up your sleeves when you are tucked up in a mantle of mystery. The dangerous political activity of Spanish soldiers is, perhaps, due to their walking about in jackets and tunics, and having their arms free. A civilian Spaniard would much sooner abandon his hat or his boots than his cloak. The highest compliment which he can pay you on meeting you in the street is to uncloak; and I have heard the fact that the people so rarely uncover when the Sovereign passes, accounted for on the ground that to do so they must remove their cloaks, and so run the risk of catching the much-dreaded pulmonary malady of Madrid. There are but two conjunctures in which a genuine Spaniard will without reluctance unmuffle himself. The first is when he sees Beauty in distress. Then will he cover her with his cloak or spread it on the ground for her to walk upon, as Walter Raleigh did for Great Eliza. The second is when he meets a bull. Then he whips off his cloak, flourishes it, trails it in the dust, flicks it in the eyes of his traditional foe, and, with a cry of "*Ah, Toro!*" only regrets that it is not scarlet.

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## CHAPTER X.

### THE "MANANA" TREE AND THE "MOONERS" OF MADRID.

EVERYBODY is aware, upon the authority of Captain Fluellen, that Monmouth and Macedon are as like each other as two peas, both physically and historically. The names, too, of those famous cities are linked together by very subtle mutual relations, and in each of them, as you perceive, there is an *m* and an *n*. Just so it is with the English word "mooner," and the Spanish word *mañana*, and the parallel holds good in other respects. A "mooner" is an idle, listless, friendlessly-inquisitive person, of street-wandering habits, and answers to the French *badaud, gobemouche*, and *flâneur* combined. *Mañana* means to-morrow; but what has *mañana* or to-morrow to do with "mooning"? Everything. "*Mañana*" is the chosen motto of the Spanish mooner. *Mañana* is an institution. *Mañana* is the chief and most mysterious of the *Cosas de España*. *Mañana* is a language in itself. *Quien dice Mañana, dice todo.*

Lord Bacon, many moons ago, and John Evelyn after him, expressed most ominous fears that the tree-

growth of Europe would ere long become insufficient for the needs of society. It is true that we do not seem to be so thickly wooded as of yore. The Pagoda Tree has been shaken to its last golden mohur, and the Nabobs and Quihis of Leadenhall, who were wont to bask in the glow of its foliage, have fled shrieking before a rabble rout of competitive examiners. The Sir Charles Woodman has not spared *that* tree. One may note the disappearance of many other monarchs of the forest, the jungle, and the copse. The birch, for instance, is rapidly fading from the groves of Academe, and is with difficulty cultivated even in the classical and congenial soil of Eton and Harrow. Schoolboys rejoice greatly at its decay; but the dread goddess who drinks the tears of children points with a grim smile to a newly-introduced tree, the gutta percha, whose product does not wear out, and hurts quite as sorely as birch. There has been a painful scarcity of maritime store pines—on canvas—since the death of Turner; and neither the beech nor the ash has looked so elegant in water-colour since J. D. Harding left us. The Tree of Liberty, so promising a sapling in '48, has withered on the Continent to the tenuity of a clothes-prop; the Boot Tree, since the invention of *brodequins* with elastic sides, has become almost extinct; the Christmas Tree, an exotic from Germany, is running the old holly and older mistletoe very hard; the Cocoa Tree in St. James's Street, which always said "die," or "dice," is dead; and the Paddy,

or Cork Tree has been transplanted to the United States. The 'possum can no longer take refuge in the branches of the Gum Tree. He was a Confederate 'possum, and was fain to "come down" at the invitation of a Yankee Swamp angel. The Palmetto Tree is also defunct. Though laws were framed for every degree, there is no "good company" at Tyburn Tree, beyond those who are bidden to genteel dinner parties in Westbourne Terrace. The Tree of Knowledge—well, it is getting on as well as can be expected; and as for the Upas Tree, I frankly confess that I don't believe in it off the boards of the playhouse and out of the opera of the *Africaine*. It is certain that disafforestation has been carried on of late years to an alarming extent. Epping and Hainault, Sherwood and Dean, are passing into the mythical state. The ghost of William Rufus wouldn't know the New Forest; and it is but scant comfort to be told that there will always be willows enough to weep over, and yews in plenty to shade our graves, and that Mr. Tressels will never lack stout seasoned elm to make us wooden jackets withal.

Holloa not; for not yet are we out of the wood. A tree in sight appears. In the ancient, honourable, and famous country of Spain may be espied a most noble and valiant *arbuste*. Its trunk is large enough to contain a colossal Castle of Indolence, furnished exclusively with rocking chairs and Great Beds of Ware; and outside a bench runs round its trunk, on which

many millions of Spanish ladies and gentlemen sit, twirl their fans, smoke, and *moon*. This vegetable giant is of a species left unfigured by Linnæus, and unaccountably ignored by Mr. Loudon. Yet, as a tree, it is both venerable and historical. It is "gnarled and branched in wild festoon—in ramous wrestlings interlaced, a forest Laocoon." Its canopy has sheltered many a scene of greenwood love and dalliance; its leafage might be eloquent on "old intrigues and privy leagues, tradition leaves in blank." Don Quixote de la Mancha has unbuckled his armour under that tree, and Sancho opened his wallet and dispensed his wise sayings beneath its boughs. It overhung the brook in which Dorothea washed her feet. Cherubino held tryst there with Susanna. In a cunning recess at the roots was hidden the leathern bag that held the soul of the licentiate Pedro Garcia. The Bachelor of Salamanca may have wished himself married there; and Lazarillo de Tormes might with propriety have been hung to one of its branches with Guzman de Alfarache as a pendant. A classic tree! The name of Miguel de Cervantes is cut deep into its bark. Only the restless Lope de Vega disdained its kindly shade; he was too busy, too eager to make money. A huge tree! Bigger than the Fairlop oak, bigger than a banyan, for it overshadows the whole mellow land of Spain, from Pampeluña to Seville, from Oviedo to Alicante. Its branches stretch across the Atlantic; canopy the far Antilles; put Cuba and Porto Rico *al sombra;* make a shady place of the

Spanish Main, and take in even Mexico, and Chili, and Peru. It is a pacific tree, hung seemingly with lotos flowers, but for whose drowsy influence there would be a *pronunciamiento* and a revolution in the Peninsula once a week instead of twice a year. It is a talking tree, like Mr. Tennyson's oak, and ever since the days of the Second Philip has been softly murmuring, "Take your time, *caballeros*. Don't be in a hurry. *No corre priesa. Sabe Dios! Quien sabe? Que se aguante hasta el Jueves*"—and other judicious counsels deprecatory of haste, or noise, or flurry. This is the famous *Mañana* tree—the tree of the Spanish mooners—a tree original and unique — the Imperial Tree of Spain, and which to my mind explains all other Spanish trees.

In the Spanish language *mañana*, I have to repeat, means simply "to-morrow." *Hasta mañana*, until to-morrow; *hasta pasado mañana*, until the day after to-morrow. These are among the earliest phrases taught you by the snuffy professor of Castilian who attends you at the rate of a dollar an hour. But to the genuine Spaniard the word comprises a whole lexicon of laziness. It is astonishing that Mr. Ford should have omitted to mention the *mañana* shibboleth among the "wrinkles" in lieu of a vocabulary which he gives in his vivacious handbook. Perhaps he, too, after long sojourn in Spain, had come beneath the shadow of the tree, and put off inserting the word until *mañana* came. To the Spaniard it is essential as his cloak. It is twin

brother to Sancho's definition of sleep; for it wraps a man round like a cloak. It is ease, it is comfort, it is happiness. *Pan y toros*—bread and bullfights are said to be all that a Spaniard needs; but without the shelter of the *Mañana* tree he would be a desolate creature indeed. It is to him an entire circle of the sciences, a perfect code of philosophy; not the barren, reckless philosophy of the Epicurean—"Let us eat, drink, and be merry, for to-morrow we die"—but a calm, resigned, and trustful state of serenity. We are hungry; well, we will sit down and rest ourselves. *Mañana* the *puchero* will be smoking; there will be an *olla de arrogante presencia.* It is a fact that at the lower Spanish eating-houses the advent of an "arrogant" *olla podrida* is advertised by placard several days in advance. People put their names down for it. Do not the old gentlemen in our London club dining-rooms put down their names for the earliest cuts at the joint, and fume fearfully if their turn be forgotten? We are thirsty; well, we will sit down and twist a *papelito. Mañana* will pass a caballero with a watergourd at his side. We are poor and ragged: *Mañana* will bring in its blessed train a coach and six mules, a velvet cloak, a *sombrero galonado,* and a purse full of pistoles. The country is convulsed. Well, *mañana* there will be liberty, security, order, prosperity. The *afrancesados,* the *polizones,* the *zaragates,* the *chinches,* the *extranjeros,* in a word, will cease to conspire against Spain, and will be driven out. *Mañana nosotros* will be happy. We

have a debt to pay, a visit to make, a letter to write, a dose of physic to take, a servant to discharge, an appointment to keep, a transaction to close, a will to make. *Mañana* we will disburse the *duros*, and swallow the pill, and sign the deed, and leave the legacy. *Para hoy*, so far as to-day is concerned, we will moon.

In Italy mooning is known as the *dolce far niente;* but when in this state the Italian generally falls in love, and, consequently, into mischief. The German only moons when he is a professor, and far gone in Greek anthropomorphism and beer. The French mooner approaches slightly to the Madrid type; but he is a hundred times more bustling and vivacious than his trans-Pyrenean compeer. You know the Paris mooner: the unobtrusive creature who is to be found sitting outside the *café* as early as eleven in the morning; whose favourite newspaper is the *Petites Affiches*, in which there is no news at all; who goes to the Bourse, not to speculate, but to warm his feet over the stove grates; who never plays at dominoes or piquet, but sits for hours dully gazing at those who do, just as Balzac's Feragus watched the bowlers in the Champs Elyssées; and who day after day is to be met with crawling round about a certain circuit; in fine weather on the Boulevards, when it rains in the *passages;* inspecting, as though they were things of yesterday, the thousand-times-seen show-case of the photographer at the street corner, or watching with seemingly unflag-

ging interest the process of mending the asphalte pavement. To see the boiling black compost ladled out of its caldron, pressed down, patted smooth, and powdered with gritty particles, is to the mooner as great a pastime as the making of dirt pies is to children. I knew one mooner who, at a certain hour every afternoon, was to be found in front of a certain shop in the Rue de l'École de Médecine, a surgical preparation shop, in whose window was a monstrous tapeworm in a bottle. They removed the bottle, and the mooner was seen no more. I daresay he took to his bed and died of a broken heart. A horse falling down in the street is a rich treat to the mooner; and he never fails to stop before the houses where people lie dead, and spell out the cipher on the mort-cloth of the *chapelle ardente*. It is stated indeed that a large proportion of the audience round the graves at Montmartre and Père la Chaise, where funeral orations are delivered, are composed of mooners. Occasionally he moons with malice prepense, taking account of *modistes* and their bandboxes; but he then loses his claim to the title, and becomes *un Monsieur qui suit les femmes*. Foreigners new to Paris, struck by the mysterious ways of the mooner, often mistake him for a *mouchard*, a spy of the police; but he is in general perfectly innocuous —a pacific *petit rentier*, who has left off selling stockings and scented soap so soon as he had acquired a modest competence, and has retired on his rentes, to moon for the rest of his life. He is perfectly happy, and the

only peril which menaces him is that of being run over.

In America the mooner is a loafer, who hangs about hotel bars or puts his feet up on the back of a chair, and smokes and chews and spits and whittles, and loafs generally. But he has an active as well as a passive state. He is not always loafing. He jumps to his feet to liquor up, to go down town and make fifty thousand dollars off a "corner" in petroleum, to save the republic, to move a resolution, to draw a revolver and "fire free." The London mooner is to be found at the two opposite poles of society. He is either the hulking, lowering savage who leans with folded arms against a post in Seven Dials on Sunday morning, waiting for the public-houses to open; or the well-dressed old gentleman you may see inspecting with intense interest the ripping up of the roadway when there is something the matter with the gas, or the sewers, or the water, or the telegraph wires, or staring in at the jewellery and porcelain in the pawnbrokers' shops. But I hardly know whether these individuals are really mooners—they have a definite aim and purpose. The late Mr. Bernal went mooning about back streets and "leaving shops" for years; but see what a collection of cups and saucers he left! The hulking savages of Seven Dials are only mooning until their thirst can be assuaged. Even the old gentleman peeping into the subways may be a rival of Bazalgette or Hawkshaw, and meditating the construction of *super-*

ways. Thus, too, the shady folks who loiter under the arcades of the Royal Exchange out of 'Change hours, or on the back benches of the Court of Exchequer, or in the lobbies of the House of Commons, may be in momentary expectation of their ship coming home of their lawsuit being called on, of their petition being ordered to lie on the table. They are not mooners, but waiters upon Providence.

But the mooners of Madrid are of another race. They moon with apparently no other earthly object than because they like mooning. *Mañana* they will set about doing something; to-day they moon. And to-morrow in Spain never seems to arrive. It must be in *la semana de los tres Jueves*, the week of three Thursdays. The Yankee loafer is obliged to put his feet up, or at least to lean against a bar counter, ere he can loaf at his ease. The English one is nothing without an umbrella; but the stock-in-trade of the Madrileño mooner consists simply of a cloak and a *librito*, or little book for making *cigaritos*. *Primâ facie* every Spaniard out of doors looks like the First Robber. A tall form, muffled up to the nose in a voluminous cloak, a slouched hat, and a pair of dark, lustrous eyes, with bent brows, fixed on you. You feel rather frightened. You have heard of the romances *de capa y espada*. Here is the *capa*, the cloak, most melodramatically draped. Where can the Toledo blade be hidden? When the cloak is without a cape, and of uniform black, and the eyes are over-

shadowed by a monstrous shovel hat, you are apt to feel even more nervous. You smell pitch. Your own cloak clings to you after the manner of a *San Benito*. You remember with horror how many years Corporal Trim's brother lay in the dungeons of the Inquisition for no graver offence than marrying a widow who sold sausages. Your mind is infinitely relieved when the folds of the mysterious cloak are disarranged, and the wearer, producing his *librito*, proceeds to twist a *cigarito*. This is, after all, only Don Fulone or Don José, a good-natured mooner. He wraps himself again in his toga and starts off, mooning in a sedate and grandiose manner full of ineffable things.

The cafés of Madrid are of enormous size, but it is hard to understand how their proprietors can make them pay. They are full from morning to night of mooners, but rake the tables with your eye, and not once in twenty glances can you discern a touch of colour to denote that the customers are imbibing stimulants. There is universal smoking, but the smokers bring their tobacco bags and paper books with them. That cannot be any profit to the house. Very few even seem to take coffee. Innumerable decanters of cold water, glasses, and a few little trays of sugar are the only table deckings. Save in the cafés specially patronized by foreigners there are no newspapers. People go to the café not to read, but to moon. One customer, perhaps, gives an order for some sugar. To him presently enter nine other mooners, who sit down, cloak enwrapped,

over against him, and watch him sip his innocent beverage. Little boys wander in with lottery tickets. The mooners take them from the boys, glance at the numbers, shrug their shoulders, murmur "*Sabe Dios! Quien sabe!*" and return them. When, as sometimes happens, but not often, a mooner buys a decimo—the tenth part of a ticket—not nine, but nine-and-twenty mooners gather round him; the very waiters inspect the tickets, and give their opinions as to whether they consider the numbers favourable or unfavourable. All this time the heavy velvet hangings which shroud the portals are raised and lowered, and more mysterious men in cloaks make their appearance, flit in a ghostly manner from table to table, and flit out again, consuming nothing. How do the cafés pay?

There are no female mooners. Ladies of rank, not being *extranjeros*, are rarely seen on foot, save at early morning going and returning from mass, or when they alight from their carriages for a short walk in the Prado. Very different this from Berlin, where it is common to see duchesses and princesses trotting blithely up and down the Linden, a large-whiskered Prussian Jeames only following them to see that they come to no harm. Even among the middle and lower classes you rarely see a female alone in Madrid. They generally run in couples; and, so far from mooning, are most alert and springy in their movements. You hear a robe rustle; you see a mantilla; the click of a fan is audible; a Parthian dart from a pair of big

black eyes pierces through your waistcoat—sometimes even transfixing the "chemise of flannel"—and the vision is gone. They are not handsome, the burgess and working Madrileñas, but they have wonderful eyes.

As for the male mooners—the cloudy señores in mantles who stalk about every public place, saying little and doing nothing the live-long day—I am puzzled to know to what class of the population they really pertain. They don't belong to the working classes—that is evident; for the workmen of Spain are a most energetic and laborious race. Are they hidalgos in reduced circumstances? Are they the incarnation of Spanish Bonds, long deferred? Are they familiars of the abolished Inquisition in the receipt of small pensions, and, like most annuitants, living to an indefinite age? All around them are busy crowds, attired in the latest Parisian style, dandies and stockjobbers, tourists and commercial travellers, all the noisy elements of a great city. But they keep on their way unmoved, these mooners, ever faithful in their devotion to the *Mañana* tree. In any case, I am sure they are genuine Spaniards —Spaniards of the old, old stock; and I know from whom they inherited that habit of placid and philosophic mooning. It was from the Moors. They were the first mooners. The *Mañana* tree is but the *Kef* of the Arabs. In the bazaars of Algiers and Oran you may see to this day *talebs* renowned for great sanctity, who sit all day wrapped to the eyes in their *burnouses*,

and doing nothing. Peep into one of those dark and delightful little Moorish coffee-houses, and you will after a while discern that the tall donkey-driver who has just ordered a ha'porth of coffee, and the lean Arab porter who is submitting his poll to the barber's shears —for in most of these coffee-houses there is easy shaving—are each surrounded by a group of Arabs as tall and brown and lean as they, calmly watching the operations of coffee drinking and shaving. They are Moorish mooners.

## CHAPTER XI.

SPANISH DUPLICITY—MADRID A "SHAM"—GENTEEL SPANISH BEGGARS.

THE Duke of Wellington's Despatches contain many bitter complaints on the part of the great captain concerning the Spanish tendency to deception. "Low intrigue and fraud, mingled with a great deal of obscure haughtiness"—this was the Duke's pithy summary of the characteristics of the Spaniards with whom he came in contact. But it was with Government officials that the victor of the Peninsula had mostly to do—with contractors and go-betweens, and lobbyers of the Cortes—with petty local magnates and pettier grandees—with that tribe of hungry, hypocritical, false, corrupt, bureaucratic people to be found in all countries, whom Mr. Carlyle has described under the generic title of "doleful creatures having the honour to be." Of an element in Spanish statecraft which has more or less permeated through all but the industrial ranks of society, and which is known as *doblez*, or doublefacedness, I have been frequently warned.

The Spaniard may have addicted himself to duplicity through a variety of causes. For more than two cen-

turies the existence of such a tribunal as the Inquisition made it exceedingly perilous for any one to wear his heart upon his sleeve. The dread, indeed, of that infernal institution led men to cloak up their hearts and surround them with triple walls of equivocation or reticence, forced them to put bridles on their tongues, and palisade their lips lest they should give umbrage to the familiars of the holy office. Such an education is not very apt to make men frank and candid. It rather tends to produce concealment and dissimulation. What with Philip II. lurking in his cell at the Escorial, and boasting that he ruled Europe with a bit of paper; with the disciples of the exemplary Loyola teaching that lying was one of the angelic virtues, and that no faith was to be kept with heretics; and with that devilish Inquisition, its armies of spies and delators, and its dungeons shrouded in impenetrable mystery, the poor Spaniard was fain to keep his tongue between his teeth, or, if he spoke at all, to anticipate the Talleyrandian dictum by using language only to hide his real thoughts.

Ere we judge this people too hastily or too harshly, we should remember what they have gone through. The nigger, I perceive, is held by some amiable philanthropists in England to be exempt from the slightest blame if he pilfers, if he refuses to work, if he abandons his wife and children, if he besots himself with rum, and winds up by murdering his white neighbour. The poor fellow has been a slave. That fact is to cover all his

sins. His little peccadilloes are only the vices inherent to a state of slavery. When he has been free for three or four generations he will exhibit all the noble and upright qualities of the free man—precisely, for instance, as he has done in Hayti. If, then, the Iberian be given to the practice of *doblez*, is not the fault rather at the door of Philip and Ximenes, and Mariana and Sanchez, than at his own? Constitutional liberty, and that of a very lame and muddled kind, he has only enjoyed for thirty years. Surely he cannot be expected to use his privileges as wisely as a people who have possessed representative institutions ever since the reign of King Alfred. I think that—if we looked upon the Spaniard as a child just out of leading strings, as a blind man just restored to sight, as a prisoner just released from the long thraldom of a Bastile, rather than as a full-grown adult, accountable for all his actions—we should be enabled to consider his shortcomings more equitably, and augur more favourably for his future.

Taking Spain from another point of view, one is inclined to regard it as a country remarkably free from deceptions and shams. The only utter sham in Spain is Madrid. That capital is, indeed, the perfection of make-believes. The reader will remember that when I first pitched my tent in the Puerta del Sol, I fell into a kind of ecstacy about the life and movement, the bustle and glitter, the energy and go-aheadedness which the city of the Manzanares seemed to present. Then

I heard so many newspapers cried; I saw so many book-stalls and advertisements of day schools; I found so many theatres, cafés, and reading-rooms; I beheld the Prado so crowded with brilliant equipages; I saw so many stylishly-dressed people; I descried so many signs of real working civilization—photography, French bonnets, gloves, new novels, new music, *pâtés de foie gras*, and Eau de Cologne—that I imagined the backward, drowsy, ignorant Spain one reads about in Ford and Borrow to be purely mythical or spitefully exaggerated. But after having spent five weeks in and about Madrid, a change has come over the spirit of one's dream. I like the country, the city, and the people. They don't tread on your corns, they don't dig their elbows into your ribs, they are polite and obliging, and decidedly picturesque and original. You are never bored in Madrid; you never feel that the most valued friend would be a magician who would lend you a carpet to transport you two thousand five hundred miles beyond the Guadarrama; but at the end of a month's sojourn you begin to have an uneasy sensation that Madrid is a sham of shams; that it is hollow, that it is "bogus," that all this club life, Prado life, Puerta del Sol life—all this shopping, theatre-going, promenading, and *tertulia* attending is so much veneer; and that underneath lies stagnant the real, drowsy, unadvanced Spain of two centuries ago.

When you have tried to send a few telegraphic messages, and to get a few letters from the *Correo* or Poste

Restante—when you have studied the intricacies of the *Mañana* tree—when you have had anything out of the common way to do with Spanish tradesmen or Spanish servants—then, with woeful mien, you are forced to confess that Rome was not built in a day, and that Madrid—the shining veneer notwithstanding—is not quite a civilized capital. I could live in it, I think, very contentedly by myself for years, like the hidalgo in 'Gil Blas" who kept his ready money in a big chest, and took out every morning his supply of dollars for the day. I could vegetate between the Calle de Alcalà and the Calle Mayor, a hermit as jocund as he of the Chaussée d'Antin; for in Madrid one enjoys at least the inestimable blessing of being let alone, and left to follow one's own business or the bent of one's own fancy precisely as one chooses. Nobody asks you where you are going, or what you are doing, or how much you have a year, or how long you intend to stay. Few people, indeed, care to know what your surname may be. You are Don Tomas or Don Roberto, precisely as you like, and that is enough. You may reside in a hole under a staircase or hang your hammock on a beam in a cockloft, and it is nobody's business to inquire why you do not reside in a "brown stone house with a marble façade." You needn't wear a shirt unless you please. There is no law to compel you to wear a coat either, and you may dispense with trousers as completely as an Albanian or a Highlander does. Have you not the all-sufficing mantle?

A poor dear kinsman of mine used to cherish a pathetic aspiration for a particular costume to be worn in hot weather. It consisted of a horseman's cloak, made very full and long, with an all-round collar sewn on to the cape, and completed at the base by a pair of black gaiters. His aspiration might have been realized had he lived to visit Madrid. You must needs be shod and have some kind of covering for the head; but, beyond a hat and boots, what do you want besides a cloak? You need not give your address to your friends. You are to be found "all around"—on the Prado, on the Puerta del Sol. You need not dine anywhere. Bread is cheap. You may hide a lump underneath your cloak, and slip into *portes-cochère* to munch it. This is a city where you are permitted to sit down on any man's staircase, and to light your cigar behind any man's door. If the worst come to the worst, you can beg.

Don't think I am jesting. Life is so mysterious, and so full of dark nooks and corners underneath all this veneer, that many an embarrassed *caballero*, who has taken his last morsel of family plate to the *Renderia*, has been fain, at last, to combine the profession of mendicancy with that of mooning. Several times, towards dusk, have I been accosted by well-dressed persons, warmly cloaked, who have asked, not in a dejected or pathetic whine, but in a seriously confidential tone, for a *limosna*. Things were going badly at home, *muy mal a la casa*, I suppose. One lady who solicited assist-

ance, as I was talking to a friend at the door of the Grand Fonda de Paris, had a Lyons shawl over her head which must have been worth at least ten dollars.

I am content to admit that street-beggars are not to be tolerated in England. They are so rude; they tell such abominable lies; they ill-treat their poor little babies so; their rags are so very unpicturesque; they use such horrible language; and they get so tipsy. In a word, the English beggar is morally and physically, and from top to toe, a foe to society. We know that he is banded against us. We know that he is humbugging us. We know that he will spend in riot and debauchery the pence out of which he may cozen us. We know that he is legally entitled to relief if he applies at the workhouse. He does not always obtain it on application, to be sure; but, at all events, we know him to be a troublesome, dirty, destitute, illegal person, who hates us because our pantaloons are not in tatters. But the Spanish beggar is, comparatively speaking, a gentleman. He is exquisitely well bred; his address is dignified. If, when he approaches you, he sees that you are engaged, he waves his hand in a discreet and patronizing manner, and stands aloof, as though to apprize you that there is no hurry, and that his little matter of business will keep. If he meets a brother beggar on the street he lifts his hat to him, and, with many bows, asks how he has passed the night. Rags, and a bandaged head, and a sore toe or two, he only carries when he is a licensed beggar, re-

cognised by the police; and then they are his uniform, and he wears them with an air. When he is decently dressed, however, and is mysterious and confidential, he becomes well nigh irresistible.

I heard lately a very painful story of a Spanish gentleman who, returning home very late one night, was suddenly accosted by a well-dressed man, who, holding a knife to his breast, demanded his money. He at once "executed" himself, as the French say, and gave up his purse, which contained some gold pieces and some silver. To his astonishment the robber, opening his *porte-monnaie*, counted out five *pesetas*, making a dollar, and returned the purse and gold to him, saying, "My children want bread. If I had begged you would have only given me two *cuartos*. By robbing you I have enough to feed my family for two days. Forgive me, and God be with you." Then he dived down a dark alley and was seen no more. This was a beggar of desperate expedients; but very few of his fraternity, I think, would be guilty of so indelicate a proceeding. As a rule, the Spanish beggar is a firm friend of law and order, a most orthodox Catholic, an ardent loyalist, and on terms of the most stately courtesy with the *cura* and the *guardias civiles*. He is very fond of haunting the steps of the churches and the porticos of the palace; and, indeed, it is said that the Royal servants have some difficulty in keeping the tribe of mendicants from storming the Royal carriage when her Majesty goes out for an airing.

The beggars know very well that Isabella Segunda would give her head away were it loose, and they lie in wait for her accordingly.

There is a well-authenticated story of a poor woman, not precisely a beggar, but who had a petition to present, the prayer of which was of course a *limosna*, who pounced upon the Queen just as she was coming out of the garden of the Retiro. Her prayer was very soon heard; but, unhappily, when her Majesty felt in her pocket she found that she had no money. Kings, queens, millionaires, and theatrical managers never have ready money about them enough to pay for a cab or a turnpike. "Come to the palace to-morrow," said the Queen to the petitioner. "Alas!" replied the poor woman, "the servants will not let me pass." Whereupon it is on record that Donna Isabella de Bourbon, stooping down, *took off one of her shoes*, and gave it to the suppliant as a token and a sign that she might be allowed next day to pass the palace gates and have her claim allowed.

I am sure, were Charles Lamb alive, and were he to come to Madrid, he would turn beggar. He threatened to do so once in London, if he lost his pension from the East India Company. Sterne's beggar—the hero of the "riddle," the stealthy man who never accosted persons of his own sex, but glided after ladies, and whispered flattery in their ears, and never asked for less than twelve sous—would have made his fortune here. The appeals of the Madrid beggars are rarely

fruitless. The Spaniards bestow alms as unconcernedly as they roll cigarettes. It is one of the conditions of existence. This, I take it, with their extreme temperance and their fondness for phlegmatic mooning, they have learned from the Moors. To relieve beggars is with a Mahommedan as much a part of his religion as prayer and ablution. And if Sir Robert Carden wished to become a candidate for Bethlehem Hospital, I should advise him to pass a morning at the door of a Spanish church, and an afternoon in an Algerian coffee-house. The amount of indiscriminate almsgiving he would witness would surely drive that worthy baronet stark-staring mad.

## CHAPTER XII.

THE "TERTULIA"—ENGLISH LADIES AT MADRID—MILITARY AND CIVIL DANDYISM—HOARDING IN SPAIN.

I HAVE specified some of the delights of living in Madrid, but there are others yet to recount. Apart from the fact that the Museo contains some of the noblest pictures in the world, and that the Real Armeria boasts a collection of ancient armour and weapons which may laugh to scorn the Tower of London and the Musée des Souverains at the Louvre, you may, being neither a sightseer, a politician, a mooner, nor a beggar, enjoy yourself in a very quiet and rational manner every evening in the week, and entirely without expense. There is the *tertulia*. The *tertulia* is the Spanish "at home." After you have been once presented in a Spanish house you are free to drop in any evening you like for a social chat. You are nearly sure to find the family at home; that is, if you go at proper visiting hours, namely, from about ten at night to about one in the morning. They lead a most owl-like life, these sociable Madrileños. Many ladies do not begin to receive until they have returned from the opera. In a few houses you may get a cup of tea at

the *tertulia*; in the majority the entertainment consists of conversation and a glass of water. Sometimes a servant brings round a lump of sugar on a tray. You may sweeten your water if you like. In many houses you are allowed to smoke, if you bring your own tobacco. My own fortune has been exceptional in this respect; and on three successive Sundays I have been hospitably regaled on such delicacies as salmon, turtle-soup, and English haunch of mutton; but the staple of the *tertulia*, or evening's reception, is as I have set it down. What more do you need? You save candle-light, at all events. You save fuel. At least, you should be grateful for light and warmth.

This is all very charming so long as you are alone and selfish. For a Timon of Athens, for a man sick of the world, or an easy-going, temperate cynic, satisfied with little, and quite happy with a nightly pabulum of small talk, I cannot imagine a better place for retirement than the Spanish capital—a *pronunciamiento* being given from time to time to prevent your growing rusty, and the heydays of the carnival taking place once a year to enliven you up. With a cloak for your outdoor mooning, and a dress-coat for *tertulias* of the more exclusive kind—and both cloak and coat should wear for twenty years—with these, and a healthy appetite for cold water and tobacco, you might give *ennui* the go-by, and be vastly happier than those fretful old fellows of the London West-end, who belong to half a dozen clubs, wash their hands at one, read the *Globe* at another,

look at themselves in a glass at a third, breakfast at a fourth, dine at a fifth, go to sleep at a sixth, and scold the waiters and abuse the committee at all.

But with the celibate state the delights of Madrid end. It is not a place to which you can bring your wife or your belongings. An English lady in Madrid is as uncomfortable as a cameleopard in a confessional. Now that the railway communication from Bayonne is complete, the trains sometimes bring parties of English exquisites, delightful lots of ladies with their maids and their bandboxes who are wintering at Pau, or have even come from Cannes and Nice to have a look at Madrid. They are in raptures the first day with the Museo, and the Armeria, and the Royal Coach-house; they think the Puerta del Sol delicious, and the Prado a magnificent sight. Then, perhaps, they run down to Toledo, and come back in raptures again at having bought from the *valet de place* a real Moorish *azulejo* or enamelled tile, or a real Moorish door-nail, or a real Toledo blade, curled up in a box like a watch-spring, and manufactured in the Rue St. Antoine, Paris. The more adventurous push on to Seville and Granada; but the exquisites from Pau rarely get beyond Madrid. It is painful, yet interesting, to watch day by day at the *table d'hôte* how their raptures gradually decline; how to delight succeeds *ennui*, to that aversion, and then terror; and how at last they beg papa to take them away from this horrid, horrid place. Yes, it is dreadful to be obliged to wipe your plate very carefully with

your napkin every time it is changed. It is painful to know that if you abandon your knife and fork as you would at most European hotels, they are not changed, but hastily rubbed behind your back on awful rags the reverse of clean, so that prudent people keep a spare piece of bread by them, and, retaining the *cuchillo* and the *tenedor*, use the bread as a Kent's patent knife-cleaner. It is frightful to know that, so soon as ever the toast and salad are disposed of, the Spaniards begin to smoke; and that, if there were not English ladies present, they would smoke between the soup and the *puchero*.

And there is no butter in Madrid save that which comes from France, and which is dispensed as charily as though it were worth its weight in gold, and has besides an evil taste and eviler smell. There is plenty of olive oil, but it is usually rancid. There are plenty of pickled olives, but they are bitter and not salt. There are scarcely any vegetables. The meat is poor and stringy. The Val de Peñas table wine has a somewhat too *prononcé* smell of its pigskin bottle. French wines are extravagantly dear. Sherry is neither cheap nor good. There is not such a thing as a salt-spoon. The waiters are kind and friendly, but they are not the well-drilled and obsequious slaves of Western Europe. They wear moustaches; dress as they like; and if you meet them on the staircase you will probably find them smoking or strumming on the guitar. Your letters are delivered at all kinds of odd hours. If any one calls

on you, and you are from home, your visitor's card comes to hand a few days afterwards, sometimes not at all. Under these circumstances, is it to be wondered at if the genteel damsels of Tyburnia and Belgravia become positively awe-stricken at Madrid, and entreat papa to take them back to Pau?

The truth is, that the veneer of Madrid to an ordinary tourist wears off in about six days. Then he comes on the rough but coarse wood of *la Berberia Christiana*. He cannot stand it, and takes to flight. Genuine Spain is not for exquisites. If there be no more of a dish at dinner time the waiter does not deign to make an excuse, but simply says, *No hay mas*. If there be plenty of it, and he likes you, he pokes his finger at a particular morsel and advises you to eat it, because there will be no more of that dish for ever so long. To their especial favourites the waiters themselves recommend tit bits, and pop them on their plates. This is quite oriental—when they go so far as to cram the choice morsel into your mouth—and quite Spanish; but it is not at all Tyburnian or Belgravian.

With something like a shudder, while I am discoursing of the hollowness of the capital, I see a hundred things around me to remind me of how exceedingly genuine a land Spain continues to be. I wouldn't bring my maiden aunt; I wouldn't bring my spinster cousin; I wouldn't bring any lady, unless she were as tough as the late Ida Pfeiffer or Lady Hester Stanhope, to the town, or the inn, or the room in which I am now

dwelling. All are full of beauties which the lover of the picturesque might glory in, but all are equally full of horrors which would appal the mere child of civilization. So it is with life in Madrid. Side by side with the elegance of the Paris boulevards are the unpleasant realities of Spanish life. I cannot better sum up my meaning than by saying that Spain is a thoroughly classical land—as classical as Herculaneum and Pompeii; and, to judge from the internal arrangements of the houses in those disentombed cities, Herculaneum and Pompeii, in the way of domesticity, must have been as nasty and uncomfortable places for family living as Strutton-ground, Westminster, or Bethnal-green.

One thing in Madrid I am puzzled to account for is the affluence of dandyism, military and civil. You are told that the country is poor, and is becoming, through misgovernment, more impoverished every day; that she is heavily indebted; that her credit out of doors is extinct; and that the Minister of *Hacienda*, or Finances, has been reduced to such straits as to be forced to appropriate and spend the hard-earned cash of the depositors in the savings bank. You are told that the Court owes seven millions of dollars in tradesmen's bills alone. You know to your bitter cost, when a banker pays you a heavy sum in paper, that the notes of the Bank of Spain are at a discount, that you must pay three or four per cent. to get gold for them at a money-changer's, and that outside Madrid nobody will have anything to do with the issue of the National

Bank. Yet in the face of all this, you see any number of uniforms plastered with gold and silver lace; you find hotel waiters, and muleteers, and working men wearing massive gold watch chains, or finger or ear-rings; while the number of private carriages on the Prado—showy carriages, too, expensively appointed, and with liveried retainers—is only exceeded by the long-tailed, silky-maned blood horses, ridden by sumptuously attired cavaliers. How do they, if they are so impoverished, manage to pay for their grand equipages and horses? You are told that this is a city of outside show; that carriages or saddle-horses are the sole expense of what is called "society," and that at home the Spanish gentleman lives so miserably that he does not dare invite you to his house. They are certainly not a dinner-giving people; but my luck has, perhaps, been exceptional, for my experience of Madrid hospitality, so far as it has gone, would tend to prove it cordial, and ample, and splendid.

But they dine out, too, these presumably pinched Madrileños. There are some most *récherchés* restaurants in Madrid. At L'Hardy's, in the Carrera San Geronimo, you must order your dinner at least a day beforehand, and you will be served as sumptuously and charged as extortionately as at Bignon's, or the Trois Frères. If you go hungry into the "Arminio," another patrician restaurant in the same street, and venture upon anything superior to the pigskin-flavoured Val de Peñas or table wine, you will not well get clear of its portals under a hundred reals or five dollars.

The Cisne, the Europeo, are restaurants spoken of as nearly as good and nearly as dear. To ask a friend to dine at the *table d'hôte* of your hotel will cost you half a guinea at the least; but the hotel *habitués* have frequently friends dining with them, and the few restaurants I have entered have always been full. How do they manage it? How can they fill the stalls of the Teatro Real and the Zarzuela, and gamble away many piles of ounces at *monti* and *baccarat*, if they are so very hard up? Nay, what about those unutterably seedy men in cloaks who moon *al Sol*? They are always smoking. Being destitute, how do they obtain tobacco? Does it rain, like manna, from above? The paltriest *corrida de novillos* or baby bullfight, out of the regular season, at the Plaza de Toros, will be attended by its five or six thousand spectators. The prices are moderate, but not cheap. How do the poor, the very poorest —for all save the absolute badged beggars are to be found in the building—obtain the admission money? There are "bull-fighting cigars"—monstrous weeds nearly a foot long, and warranted to smoke out three bulls' lives. The men in the most tattered of mantles smoke these tremendous cigars. How do they pay for them?

Ah, you are told, it is all outside. Wait till you get away from Madrid. Wait till you penetrate, not to the interior, for Madrid is directly in the middle of Spain, but to the corners of the country. Then you will find poverty. Then you will be enabled to spy out the nakedness of the land. It is certain that the in-

habitants of the provinces have—always pleading poverty—declined to subscribe a real towards the building of the railways which pass through and which will possibly enrich their districts. Were Sancho Panza alive, he might add another proverb to his store—that French fools make railways for wise Spaniards to travel upon. The indubitable postulate that the original shareholder gets nothing for his money, seems to have sunk deep into the national mind. *Mañana*—to-morrow he may invest his loose *duros* in railway securities; but to-day he will use the line, abuse the company, and laugh at the *Franceses* who have constructed it. But are the provincials really so poor that they cannot afford to take shares in the enterprises devised for their benefit? They won't invest in railways, or in canals, or irrigation works, or roads; but they can always find money to gamble in the lottery, and to purchase the ecclesiastical property which the Government, in pursuance of the law of disamortization, is systematically selling. So soon as ever a parcel of Church land, rescued from the paralyzing pressure of the "dead hand," is put up to auction, a live Spanish hand full of gold *Isabellinas* and promissory notes is stretched forward to clutch it. There is no need to look far afield for purchasers. They are always to be found on the spot, and among the classes who generally complain with the most vehemence of being ruined root and branch. These are among the "things of Spain" which to me are most marvellous. And all the money they receive from us for their sherry and their

amontillado, their cork and their leather, their nuts and oranges, and dried raisins—what becomes of those annual millions?

I have my own hypothesis on the subject—an erroneous one, perhaps; but when one approaches financial questions, who is exempt from error? I hold that Spain is a great deal richer than she gives herself out to be. I hold that the Spaniards, as a nation, hoard. That gambling is one of their public foibles, may be; but a love of gambling is perfectly compatible with extreme avarice. The hardest-hearted, closest-fisted miser I ever knew, when you put the box in his hand and bade him call a main, would play his very coat-buttons off. I can't help thinking that those ragged-cloaked mooners on the Puerta del Sol have their long stockings at home full of gold ounces—their stores of old ducats and doubloons hid away underground in earthern *tinajas*, in the remote corners of dim *patios*. They hoard from habit. They have become secretive through necessity. In troublous times all men hoard. Many a long stocking, many a crock of gold, has been dug up, I know, in the United States, both North and South, since the end of the great war. The French *bourgeois* is a miser, the French peasant hoards habitually. The talk of the prettiest Frenchwoman is full—repulsively full—of francs and centimes. They hoard and clutch at pelf with grasping cupidity because they fear another Deluge, and another Terror, and another avalanche of *assignats*. But the Spaniard has been living in troublous times for nearly a century. If he had any

Moorish or Jewish blood in him, or spoke disrespectfully of the Church, or the Inquisition, or the eating of pork sausages, or the highly respectable fraternity of woolcombers who officiated at the *autos* as Tony Fire-the-faggots, and were termed *soldanos de la Fé*—or if detected in reading French books, or any books but missals and lives of the saints—the beneficent Inquisition would not only burn his body to save his soul, but would rob him of his money. So men hid away their dollars from the holy office as they would from a thief in the night. Then the French came, and stole everything they could lay their hands upon. Do you suppose that many a long stocking full of *duros*, many a *tinaja* crammed to the neck with *pesos fuertes*, was not unearthed with joy and gratification in 1814, like the old missal "*liberatus a rapacitate Francorum*"? And since that period what incentive has the Spaniard had but to hoard and to hide? Ferdinand robbed him, the Carlists robbed him, the Cristinos robbed him. It was a race between contending factions and succeeding Governments to see who should shear Juan Español the closest. Heaven might temper the wind to this shorn merino, but the authorities at Madrid would not. If, then, Juan Español hoards, who is to blame him? As he is chary of showing his diminished church plate and jewelled reliquaries to the *extranjeros*, so may he put away his *duros* and *pesos fuertes* in greasy rags and earthern jars, and bury them. He may be saving against the rainy day. It has been raining, politically, in this sun-burnt land for eighty years.

## CHAPTER XIII.

THE ESCORIAL—THE JOURNEY THERE BY RAIL—A TYPICAL SPANISH BEGGAR—ARCHITECTURAL FEATURES OF THE EXTERIOR OF THE ESCORIAL.

THIS, I warn the reader, will not be an amusing chapter. Its subject is the reverse of inviting; the details will be of the driest, and the whole result, I am afraid, grim. I cannot throw off a chapter on this theme in a manner which even the most tolerant of critics could pronounce "sparkling" or "picturesque." A photograph of the copious collection of specimens to be seen at the Royal College of Surgeons may be accurate, and, to the amateur of the dissected remains of humanity injected with wax, valuable; but such a photograph is not precisely the thing to send to the Exhibition of the Royal Academy, or present to the committee of ladies patronesses of a fancy fair at the Hanover-square Rooms. The description of an execution at the Old Bailey may be graphic, but it will scarcely be agreeable. There has been within these latter days a good deal of fun made out of funerals; but the comic muse has not yet invaded the parish dead-house or cracked jokes over those who are "found

drowned." Nor, so far as I am aware, has the legend of the German student and the guillotined woman—Dumas' "*Femme au Collier de Velours*"—been produced as a burlesque, with plenty of peri tights and nigger dances. I premise thus much in order to give you an idea of the frame of mind in which a traveller usually returns from the Escorial, and his consequent inability to describe that which he has seen in the style which, adopted, lays one open to the accusation of levity, and which, discarded, brings on me the charge of dullness. I must, perforce, be dull, and I daresay I shall be tiresome, for the Escorial has given me the horrors. "*Eccolo! chi ha veduto l'inferno*"—Behold him who has beheld hell—the Florentines used to whisper, nudging each other as the awful Alighieri passed by. I have not been so far as Dante, but I have passed a day among the Tombs, and seen the Night side of Spanish nature, and been terror-stricken by the solitary gloom of that vast fane which seems to have been erected to serve as a palace for King Death.

With the view of seeing the Escorial, a party of four Englishmen had been made up, and we were bound to rise very soon after six in the morning; for there are but three trains a-day to the Abode of Awe. The first starts soon after seven. The Northern terminus is a long way from the Puerta del Sol, and under any circumstances a railway journey in Spain is an expedition not to be undertaken save in a solemn and deliberate manner. You arrive at the station half an hour before

your time; and the train starts half an hour after its time, which balances things, as it were. It was a very beautiful spring-like morning, however, as fourteen mornings out of sixteen I have passed here have been; and the drive through the wide, clean, quiet streets of Madrid was delightful. The shops in which are sold Paris articles were not yet open, and the ladies and gentlemen who wear Paris hats and bonnets and crinolines were still, it is to be presumed, in a comfortable horizontal position. In a word, that daily innovation of Parisian life which half amuses and half annoys you in the Spanish capital, and which you are puzzled whether to set down as a symptom of progress or one of decadence, had not yet commenced. We drove, then, for full half an hour through veritable Spain, which at this early hour may be summed up in swarthy, stalwart-looking citizens hurrying to their work; stout servant-girls with kerchiefs tied under their chins, sweeping and scrubbing with well-nigh Dutch assiduity; mules with jingling bells, and almost hidden under piles of fodder; and *aguadores* with their long shining brazen pitchers and rotunder earthen jars. They say that this is a dirty country, and even Spaniards have cautiously intimated that they thought I was over-complimenting them in declaring Madrid to be twenty times cleaner than Berlin; but so far as I can trust the evidence of my eyes, there appears to be an immensity of scrubbing, sweeping, and whitewashing going on here; still I do not expect to find the same amount of

notable housewifery in every Spanish town, any more than—to our shame—it is to be found in every English one.

Our spirits, which rose with the crystal purity of the air and the golden brightness of the early sun, were somewhat damped as an entire regiment of cavalry came clanking by. Why, for a moment, did we look sour and downcast? Usually, to come upon so many squadrons of dragoons at early morning is a cheery rather than a mournful sight. The men look so healthy and active, their chargers so fresh; the sun shines so brightly on their trappings; there is such pleasant music in the jingling of their spurs, the rattling of their bridle-bits, the clattering of scabbards against stirrups. I have known the time when to see a troop of the Blues turning the corner of the Quadrant on their way to Whitehall was a sufficient consolation for the absence of breakfast. But these Spanish troopers, they told us, were bound on a fearful errand. Not to parade, or to exercise their horses, but to keep the ground at a certain place between the Prado and the Montaña del Principe Pio, where, at eight o'clock that instant morning, a hapless captain of infantry was to be shot. The miserable man had been mixed up in the Alcalà conspiracy, or some cognate plot. His guilt seemed clear enough, but he was young, and had a wife; and, since the sentence of the court-martial had been pronounced, this poor lady had been rushing from pillar to post—as the wretched daughter of Mrs. Surratt rushed in

Washington—striving to save her husband's life. She had gone from Captain-General to Prime Minister, from colonel to field-marshal, from the *Camarista mayor* to Padre Claret, the Royal Confessor; but the fountain was not one of mercy, and her husband was to die.

Queen Isabella, who seems to be as kindly a soul as ever breathed, might have pardoned the doomed man; the act, so soon after the birth of another Infante, would have been graceful as well-timed; but, unhappily, those sergeants of the regiment of Figueras had been shot, for the same offence, only a few days before. If the non-commissioned had fallen, how should the commissioned escape? The argument resolved itself into that pleaded by George III. when asked to spare the life of a famous and fashionable clerical forger—"If I pardon Doctor Dodd," said his logical Majesty, "I have murdered the Perreaus," alluding to two bankers—brothers—who for forgery had been duly hanged. The argument was unanswerable, and the doctor swung. You can understand, now, how we looked askance on the dragoons as they passed. When the soldier is blended with the executioner, he becomes horrible: have you never experienced a feeling of repulsion when, reading that saddest chapter in "Waverley," you seem to hear, in your mind's ear, the clangour of the drums and fifes playing a merry tune as the soldiers march back to the castle of Carlisle from the execution of Fergus M'Ivor?

There were very few passengers starting by the early train—which is the slowest of trains all the way to

Bayonne—and only our party were bound to the Escorial. A Spanish railway station does not present at any time, early or late, an enlivening spectacle. There is no bookstall, and no refreshment room. Vast waiting rooms unfurnished, save with hard benches, receive you; your only companions are a priest in a coal-scuttle hat and a black mantle, reading his breviary in a corner, and the usual average of silent men, wrapped in cloaks and mooning. They do not go off by the train; they are not there to send telegraphic messages, or to ask for parcels. They are only there to be wrapped in cloaks, to suck their cigaritos, and to moon. A lady told me that, going the other day to Toledo, she and her husband, when the railway omnibus deposited them at the Fonda, were received by about eleven silent men, wrapped in cloaks, gathered round the inn door. They went to see all the sights, and came back to the Fonda to dine; but when the omnibus was at hand to convey her back to the station she counted, gathered round the inn door, just eleven men wrapped in cloaks, who silently eyed her. These mooners do not distress me. I rather like them. I christen one mooner Anaxagoras, another Plato, another Hippocrates. They are philosophers, I think. I intend to buy a cloak with a cape next week, and to study the art of throwing the skirt over my left shoulder. With a little bread and an olive, and some smoke, and plenty of cold water, I shall get on pretty well, I dare say. Upon my word, peering up at the summit of a

deep cutting into which we plunge after leaving the station, I can see, sharp shadowed against the clear blue sky, the statue-like figure of a man looking down upon the train and mooning. On the whole, I should evince little surprise if the next dog I met were wrapped up in a cloak, and looked upon us with listless eyes.

This one man, however, is typical enough of the ineffable solitariness of Spanish landscape. After many weary miles, during which you have seen nothing alive save birds—and even they wheel and flap about in a gravely mooning manner—you come upon one man, thin, erect, keenly defined, alone, looking at you. He is a shepherd, a swineherd, a hunter, an outlaw. His sheep or pigs may be behind yonder huge cragget of rock. You know not. In a moment he is gone; but you remember his cloak, his penthouse hat, his sad eyes. You think on the anchorite of the desert, feeding on locusts and wild honey. You think on some man, wandering far away from the haunts of his kindred. You think on some Spanish Timon, cursing Madrid as heartily as Timon of old cursed Athens, and flinging a stone at Apemantus, if from the carriage window of the train he ventured to salute him with a "Como lo pasa Vd?" You think on Campbell's Last Man, the last of human mould, who is to behold the death of Creation as Adam saw its prime. This is the lone man of the *despoblado*, the hermit of the *dehesa*. In a whole day's journey often you do not meet his fellow.

I had been this road before, coming to Madrid; but my first train was an express one: this was rather a train of the suppressed order. It crept along as furtively as the ancient gentlewoman who had fallen on evil days, and was fain to cry "hearthstones" for a living, but, as she cried, expressed a *sotto voce* hope that nobody heard her. Not more than five-and-thirty miles intervene between Madrid and the Escorial; but it was past ten o'clock ere, in a mysterious and diplomatic manner, we glided into the station. I did not look to see whether the engine-driver was cloaked up to the eyes or the stoker was smoking a papelito. Both eventualities may be considered extremely probable.

A railway omnibus, with four mules harnessed to it by bits of string, was in waiting at the station; but the conductor seemed rather pleased than otherwise that we did not avail ourselves of his vehicle, and, flinging the skirt of his cloak deftly over his shoulder, made himself into a neat parcel and delivered himself on the doorstep, whence he had a good look at us as we toiled up the rather stiff half mile of hill leading from the station to the Palace. An Italian under similar circumstances, would have lain himself down and gone to sleep, but the Spaniard is too dignified to sprawl or lounge. He stands, or sits, motionless, but erect. He is not sleeping, but thinking. About what? Who can tell? What are the thoughts of sentries, of nightwatchmen, lighthouse-keepers? "What are you thinking of, Jake?" asked a smart Yankee of a nigger boy.

"I wor a finkin' what I oughter bin finkin' of," responded the dark youth. There is much philosophy in the reply—in thinking what you will think about. That is the Spaniard's mode of cogitation I apprehend. He thinks that some of these days—*mañana*, for instance—he will think about throwing aside his cloak and putting his shoulder to the nearest wheel which offers.

At the top of the hill, as we rounded the corner of a wall of loose stones, we heard, in a monotonous drone, the voice of a man piteously chanting. It was a beggar, very old, but well featured, and with something of a soldierlike carriage, who was gravely sitting down on the ground, holding out a large flapped hat for contributions, and repeating the well-conned monologue in which his poverty, his nakedness, San Lorenzo, the beauty of charity in the character of a *caballero*, the coldness of the weather, the dearness of bread, and the immaculateness of the Blessed Virgin, were all run off a reel, endless, like one thread dyed in many colours. That beggar must have been sitting at the corner of a wall for at least three centuries. I am sure he was the same beggar, or at least his twin brother, who, seeing Philip II. pick up a small copper coin called an *ochavo*, called out that his Majesty should bestow the copper upon him. The thrifty king, however, commending the supplicant generally to the protection of San Lorenzo, put the coin into his own pouch, and bade him find an *ochavo* for himself; to which the beggar haughtily re-

torted that it was only Kings of Spain who picked up farthings.* Give this beggar, too, only an *escopeta* to set up on a tripod, and he would be the image of that keen mendicant who made such a forcible appeal for aid to Gil Blas.

The beggar at the Escorial did not offer to shoot us; but we were fain to give him something for his sincerity's sake. There was no hypocrisy about him. He did not ascribe his destitution to the explosion of a coal mine, or to the introduction of machinery. He told no lies about having slept last night on a lime-kiln, and the night before on a bench in St. James's Park. Bread, to him who has no money, is always dear. It *is* cold up here in the mountains. The suppliant had manifestly no shirt, and the very smallest apology for a pair of trousers. And charity *is* a beautiful point in the character of a *caballero*. He put the case with logical clearness: That he was a beggar, and therefore begged. "Here I am, hungry and naked. Give me something for the sake of the Blessed Virgin." This appeal is akin to that of the Moorish mendicant, quite as candid and dignified in his way as the Spanish *caballero reducido á pobreza*. He rises up like a phantom at the restaurant door or the café window, rattles his bowl and staff, and in a voice not devoid of solemnity ejaculates, "There is no Allah but Allah. For the

* "Nothing new under the sun." This story is told of a Scotch nobleman and a Scotch beggar, in Dean Ramsey's amusing book. The *ochavo* is a "bawbee."

sake of the Prophet and Sidi Abd-el-Kader, two sous."

The Convent Palace of the Escorial has for dependencies two wretched villages, both bearing the same name. One, however, is styled Escorial de Abajo, the other Escorial de Arriba. I call them wretched, for they appear to be inhabited mainly by relatives and connexions of the shirtless gentleman with insufficient trousers whom we met at the hill-top; but the houses of which the hamlets are composed are nevertheless lofty and spacious, and built of shining granite. They might have been in bygone times the mansions of noblemen, and may have been barracks, or warehouses, or outbuildings of the convent. They can scarcely be said to be dilapidated, even now, for huge square masses of granite, pierced by windows, iron stanchioned, and as hard as the stone quarries and iron mines in the vicinity, are hardly susceptible of dilapidation. You can't cut up a pyramid as you would a Cheddar cheese. It took but a few hours to capture the Bastille, but it took six months' hard labour to pull the strong, old abomination down. The French, who, as adepts in the art of smashing things, might, between 1793 and 1812, have been matched against any number of Goths, Visigoths, Vandals, or Huns conceivable during the dark ages, came to the Escorial, and did their best to knock both palace and village to pieces, but they only scarified their knuckles against these impregnable granite blocks. They were forced to be content with stealing every-

thing portable they could lay hands upon. The kernel then has disappeared, but the husk and shell remain.

I strolled through the narrow and deserted streets of the two villages, seeking in vain for a group of children playing, for a woman nursing a baby, for a blacksmith at his forge, for a weaver at his loom, for a shop even where groceries or butchers' meat were sold; but found only one staring granite shell after another, the doors and archways yawning cavernous and black as the orbits in a human skull—here and there a filthy rag or scrap of matting fluttering from a pole, or stuffed between the bars of a window, and the only human beings visible a few woebegone men, cloaked, but tattered up to the eyes, tattered to the brims of their hats, tattered to the toes of their hempen sandals, who stood motionless at the entrances to the black caverns, as though they belonged to the *vorhimmel*, to some dusky limbo, and, coming up to see what the world was like, did not think much of it. Where were the women? Where was the Alcalde, or the Coregidor, or the Gefe Politico, or somebody with a decent coat on his back?

In compensation there are two *fondas*, La Miranda and La Vizcaina, and a number of smaller *posadas* and *ventas*. The Escorial during spring and autumn enjoys an amount of patronage from tourists, mainly English and American, and these inns are for their accommodation. The Spaniards do not affect the place much. It has done its work and served its turn. It belongs to the *España de ayer*—the Spain of yesterday. Now

for yesterday the Spaniard has an aversion, mingled with contempt. *Hoy*, to-day, he regards now with fretfulness, now with indifference. His hopes are centred in *mañana*, to-morrow. This, rightly interpreted, would not be so bad a code of philosophy; but the Spaniard reads it awrong. The past has taught him nothing; he despises and is impatient of the present, and his daydream of the future is only an hallucination and a pitfall. So he leaves the Escorial, even as he does the Alhambra and the Alcazar, to the *extranjero*. For a summer excursion he prefers Aranjuez or La Granja, where there are pretty gardens, many fountains, and no graves.

We breakfasted at a *fonda* kept by a Frenchman, and having ordered dinner, and ascertained, down to the minutest details, what we were to partake of at that meal—for if you do not "attend to the provand" in Spain you are a lost tourist—we then set out, with a retainer of the Miranda as a guide, for the *Real Fabrica de San Lorenzo del Escorial*. I am reminded now of two matters for regret. First, that we were not shown through the edifice by the blind guide, otherwise known as "*El Sordo*," the "Deaf 'un," who is said to know every room, picture, and book in the Escorial by heart; and, next, that I did not obtain some authentic topographical draft of the building, in order to settle the long vexed question as to whether the ground plan of the Escorial was really in the shape of a gridiron. Mr. Ford seems to favour the inference

that it is, and speaks of the "projecting handle of the gridiron," and of the architect, Juan de Herrera, having been sadly hampered in the carrying out of his designs by Philip II., who insisted that his gridiron type should be adhered to. But if this were really the case, the courtyards in the interior of the building would be of enormous length, equal to the sides of the structure indeed, and parallel to it; whereas I looked from innumerable windows on courtyards of different sizes, some very large and long, and some very small. Nor did I see any one courtyard equal in dimensions to the chambers *Patio de los Reyes*, one side of which is formed by the portico of the church.

This would seem to knock the gridiron theory on the head; for a gridiron, with a big hole in the middle, would not have suited the persecutors of the good St. Lawrence, who desired to broil him slowly and brown him delicately. The honest saint, indeed, was quite as solicitous as his cooks that he should be nicely done; for, being sufficiently grilled on one side, he desired—so say the legends—to be taken up with a fork, and turned; even inviting, in a facetious manner, his cruel tormentors to eat him when quite done. Mr. O'Shea, whose recently published guide to Spain is an admirable auxiliary to Ford—since it treats of the Spain of the present day, whereas Ford refers to a land of diligences, horse excursions, and brigands, which is fast becoming mythical—dismisses the "reversed gridiron" hypothesis as purely imaginative.

I asked a Frenchman what was the meaning of the word "*Escorial.*" He told me that it meant "gridiron." This was as bold a guess as the reply of the Paris bourgeois papa, who told his inquisitive little boy that Ludovicus Magnus on the Boulevard triumphal arch meant "Porte St. Denis." I should have asked a Spaniard. Then I should have learnt that "*Escorial*" is the place of an exhausted mine, or a receptacle for the dross of metals; and that the Spanish name for the cook's gridiron is "*las parillas, para asar carne.*" Some very curious considerations arise from these moot points. First, of the building being an immense parallelogram, containing many courts, there is no doubt. They are irregular in size. But for this, the plan of the building might really not be unlike a gridiron with a second set of bars intersecting the first at right angles. This occurred to me from remarking that on the priests' vestments and ornaments, embroidered within modern times, the Laurentian emblem was shaped precisely like the implement patronized at the Beefsteak Club, a woodcut of which article once formed the frontispiece to Cobbett's Register; whereas on many ancient vestments, and on the backs of some of the books in the library, I found the gridiron *with bars in parallel squares*—the "Westminster Gridiron," or portcullis, in fact, still rampant on county court summonses.

It is admitted that Juan de Herrera, the real architect of the Escorial, did, after the death of Batista de

Toledo, depart considerably from his master's designs, and that additional changes were made by Villacastin. Thus it is quite possible that Philip, in the first instance, in one of his moments of gloomy caprice, should have desired Toledo to build him a palace like a gridiron, just as the Earl of Bedford told Inigo Jones to build him a church like a barn; but, as usually happens in building big houses, the original plan was, in process of time, thrown on one side. But the gridiron, if gridiron there was, was to be of the portcullis, not the "Cobbett's Register" pattern. As there are some exhausted iron mines in the immediate neighbourhood of the Escorial, the name of the palace, with *scoria* to help us as a root, is appropriate enough; but I can't help thinking that a certain confusion of ideas has sprung up among Spaniards between "Escorial," an abandoned mine, and the verb "*Escoriar*," to excoriate or flay alive; and that they have mixed up St. Bartholomew, who was skinned, with St. Lawrence, who was grilled. Any way, both were, no doubt, very good saints as saints go, and well deserved to have convents, churches, and palaces dedicated to them.

I must confess—loving architecture very deeply, being quite Catholic in my love for it, and deriving equal pleasure from the contemplation of classical, Renaissance, Gothic, or Moorish specimens, so long as they be noble, and not sham—that the first sight of the exterior of the "Eighth Wonder of the World" was to me a very grievous disappointment. A huge

quadrangular heap of granite, pierced by innumerable windows—there are eleven thousand in all, they say, in compliment to the eleven thousand virgins of Cologne, who, it turns out after all, were not Cornish maids, but Castilian ones—with a large, ungraceful dome to crown the fabric—this is all you see. When you pass the Escorial by railway, it looks at a distance grand and imposing, dug out there from the flank of the mountain, or dropped from the clouds in the midst of a savage gorge; but when you nearly approach it, and find it lumped down among the poverty-stricken dwellings of the two villages, it loses all its grandeur, and looks heavy, naked, and mean. The eleven thousand windows want height; they are mostly of "squinny" proportions, and some of them are no bigger than ships' portholes. The order of architecture is rigid Doric, destitute even of the few ornaments which that ascetic style permits. No colonnades, no porticos, no flights of steps vary the exterior. Plain and barren walls and narrow windows in continuous line, rising, as in some Lancashire factory, storey above storey, drive you almost to despair. You begin to think that the finial should be, not a cupola, but a tall chimney.

It cannot exactly be said that the walls "frown" upon you. The grey old battlements of a Gothic castle do that. In the Escorial the granite on the outside is of a pale drab, and the cement between the blocks, which seems to have been laid but yesterday, though it

is three hundred years old, is as white as snow. There is not a blunt angle, a broken corner. All is spick-and-span and fresh. No; the place does not frown: it has rather the vacuous ghastly grin of a Death's head. It is a place of skulls. It looks like a sepulchre, and is one. I have often been taken to task by the inconsiderate or by the spiteful, for comparing objects which I have seen in distant countries to those familiar to us all in London. I have done and continue to do this deliberately; since I know that many of my readers are London born, and may very probably never visit the scenes I describe. With no further apology, then, for my choice of a simile, I will take one which will at once give the Londoner an impression of the outward aspect of the Escorial. It is like NEWGATE magnified a hundred times, with the cupola of Bethlehem Hospital on the roof.

But you must free your Newgate-Bedlam from London soot and smoke, and take away the niches where the statues are—you need not take the bars from the windows or the fetters from over the debtors' door, for, though devoid of actual chains and dungeon-bars, nothing can be more gaol-like than the Escorial—and you must give it a background of mountain scenery, more beautiful and sublime than any I have ever beheld out of Mexico. Here are the far-off snow-capped peaks; here are the near mountains—dark, savage, threatening to topple down on you; there, in the extreme distance, are those wonderful ranges of

pure, lapis-lazuli blue—the Turner blue—the Beverley blue, which blockheads who can imagine nothing beyond fogs and Scotch mists declare to be impossible in landscape. Here they are, however, bluer than my lord duke's ribbon; bluer than the turquoise in my lady's bracelet; bluer than your sweetheart's eyes or the veins on her white neck.

Behind you is the great grey gaol of the Escorial. Around you are the palace grounds, misnamed gardens, at most times, I should say, arid and formal, but now all bald and shrivelled—winter-stricken. The thickets which were Philip's game-preserves are thin and scrubby. Before this stretches for many intolerable roods an undulating expanse of stony, jungly, incult desert—a mere blasted heath—so blasted that you sweep it with your glass as though in quest of those ancient females so withered and so wild in their attire as not to look like inhabitants of the earth, although they are on it. You might ask, did you meet them, the way to Forres, and they might salute you as Thane of Cawdor; although it is likelier they would reply *No se sabe!* In vain you search for a cottage, a farm, a curl of blue smoke even from a neatherd's hovel. There is nothing but the scrubby stony waste. It is not good for man to be alone; and the solitude which Philip made himself here was not good for humanity. He shut himself up in a hole in a rock; spent the wealth of the Indies in carrying out his schemes of stupid bigotry; and left his country in a state of float-

ing semi-bankruptcy from which it has never recovered. But if anything could have soothed and enlivened the gloomy mind of Bloody Mary's husband, it might have been those distant mountains, so airy, so charming, so exquisitely blue. He was a man of taste, too, Philip, not unskilled in letters, or in art to some slight degree. Surely the contemplation of those mountains should have softened his heart. Nothing softened it. Nothing can soften a heart petrified and a brain ossified by religious bigotry.

## CHAPTER XIV.

THE CHURCH OF THE ESCORIAL—THE "SAGRARIO" AND THE CHURCH VESTMENTS—THE "RELICARIO"—THE CHOIR AND THE GIGANTIC CHORAL BOOKS.

NO sooner had we arrived in the region of the Escorial, than they took us, naturally enough, to the church, as the first object of interest. It is of immense size, and as you stand beneath the lantern of the dome you might for a moment fancy yourself in St. Paul's. But look around, and you will be soon undeceived. Enormous pilasters of ashen grey, the granite so glistening in rough facets that it has been compared to a surface spread with coarse salt, but destitute of the slightest architectural ornamentation—it is much if they show the scant mouldings which the Doric allows—support, as the legs of granite elephants would support, arches of which the vaults and spandrels are covered thick with frescoes. Innumerable saints, angels, cherubs, virgins, martyrs, and confessors, apotheosised princes, elements of good, elements of evil, swim about in glory, or repose on more or less damp-looking clouds. It is an *olla podrida* of Biblical personages, a

painted hagiology, with life-size illustrations from Dom Calmet's dictionary and the Acta Sanctorum.

The *retablo*, or altar-piece, is undeniably fine; and here the Milanese Giacomo Trezzo was allowed to revel in the most florid architectural decoration. The impetuous Italian has accordingly seized a fragment from the Corinthian, the Composite, the Ionic, and the Tuscan, but has most carefully eschewed the dungeon-like Doric. There was enough of that and to spare, he very probably thought, in other portions of the edifice. Still, although that *retablo* is a gorgeous piece of Renaissance work; although you are gazing on an altar which is a wondrous composite of precious marbles and inlaid jasper; although the doors have jambs of porphyry and onyx, and panels of inlaid mahogany; and although the pictures above the altar are by Pellegrino and Zucchero, and the statues by Leone and Pompeio Leoni,—still, this high chapel fails to awaken in you any feeling beyond that of intense chilliness, and that vague, nervous apprehension which is called, I believe, the "præcordial anxiety."

When a man first goes into the Basilica of St. Mark, all hot and drowsy and swarthy as it is with mosaics, he falls, as it were, into a Turkish bath of admiration. You pant—your brows grow feverish with wonder. To enter the Duomo of Milan for the first time is like being told a new fairy tale. You are entranced, and feel inclined to clap your hands for joy. But here you shiver, and cold drops seem to be trickling through

your spinal marrow, and you feel as though your blood had become as the blood of vipers. Those colossal frescoes, that altar of jasper, those doors of porphyry and sardonyx, fail to blend or harmonise with the pillars and arches of the chapel. They belong to, but are not of it. They are essentially mortuary, even as the "gilt cherub handles" and "double-headed gilt nails, and highly finished corners, with richly embossed name-plate and achievement of arms," of the grand rosewood coffin, which covers up, as you shudderingly know, only a leaden shell, and a mattress and pillow, and so much putrid humanity. And this is the Escorial throughout. The whole place is a catafalque, with ornaments stuck on regardless of expense by the undertaker.

There was not a single worshipper about, not a priest or a choir boy, not so much even as a beadle with the sly "Deo gratias" twinkle in his bleared eye of Gil Perez in the *Domino Noir*. To our guide had been adjoined not a sacristan, but appropriately enough a sexton, a dingy little old man with a beard of five days' growth, and a shabby red cloak faced with blue velvet. Extinguishing a *cigarito* as he came up jingling his keys, he was careful to inform us that, so soon as we got into the *patios* and cloisters, we were free to smoke as much as we pleased. In the high chapel the *cigarito* was not permitted; but I am afraid he had been having a whiff in a side chapel. There are two pulpits, the gift of Ferdinand VII. of unbearable memory, one on

each side the altar, which are said to have cost ten thousand pounds a-piece. Go up to them, examine them closely, and the estimate does not appear excessive, for they are one *mayonnaise* of rare marbles, jasper, chalcedony, malachite, porphyry, and alabaster, with mouldings and bosses of wrought gold. But look at them from a distance of ten yards, and, so poor is their outline, so mean their *ensemble*, that the pair do not look worth twenty pounds. Surmounted by paltry, little pink cupolas, they remind you now of such a signal box as a Chinese engineer might build for the projected railway between Canton and Pekin, and now of one of the newsvendors' pavilions on the Paris boulevards.

The *sagrario* or sacristy has a very noble vaulted ceiling, covered with frescoes, and a curious perspective continuation of the apartment is painted on the wall opposite to the entrance door. This is the "behind the scenes" of the high chapel—at once the green-room, property-room, and dressing-room for the huge show without. The walls are lined with huge oaken presses, heavily carved, and, opening the drawers one after the other, the old man in the cloak, turning up the corners of the copes and stoles and dalmatics that laid within, allowed us to peep at their magnificence. I never saw so much gold and silver and so many exquisite designs wasted as on this wardrobe of clerical old clothes. The *bordadores en oro* of Spain were as famous three centuries ago as the goldsmiths of Valla-

dolid and the cutlers of Toledo. Many of these vestments are real pictures, more beautiful than the finest tapestry the Gobelins ever turned out. One, embroidered after designs by El Mudo and Tibaldi, has been valued—arbitrarily, I should say—at forty-five thousand pounds. At any rate, they are superb, and in those old oak drawers, whence they are seldom if ever taken, they are as useless as the richly-embroidered Albanian costumes in which you went to a masquerade at the King's Theatre A.D. 1836, and which a love of old associations forbids your selling to an old clothesman. How all this clerical finery escaped those most industrious burglars the French is a matter for astonishment.

Not being provided with special permission, we could not inspect the *Camarin*, where there is a *Custodia* or Ark for the Host, presented by Queen Isabella and her consort in 1856, and in which there are said to be ten thousand precious stones. Valuing the precious stones at ten shillings a-piece, five thousand pounds might have gone a little way, perhaps, towards clearing up the arrears of interest on Spanish coupons. Nor did we see the altar where is kept the wafer which bled miraculously at Gorcum, in Holland, when trodden under foot by the naughty partisans of Zwinglius. These cock-and-bull stories, invented by priests to delude women and simpletons, lack even originality. The more you travel the more you learn what dull, gross plagiaries they are. There is a wafer that "bled

miraculously" at Brussels. Another at Turin did the same, and, with its silver pyx, leaped miraculously out of a donkey's pannier, in which a felonious soldier was carrying it away. And if the classical reader will go back to his old texts, and the non-classical one will resort to the admirable translations in "Bohn's Library," he will find that every miracle and every legend to whose authenticity the Roman Catholic priesthood—in England as well as abroad—are willing to make oath, have their parallels in pagan miracles and pagan legends, to whose verity, I daresay, the old priests of Isis and Bacchus and Cybele were ready to swear as staunchly. Our friend St. Iago of Compostello turns up as the greater Twin Brethren of Macaulay's ballads; and the stigmata of the Sor Patrocinio—a living miracle, she—are but a reproduction of the wounds of Shammuz.

One hears that ridicule is not the weapon with which to assail what other men term their religious creed. This is the old argument of the vermin who objected to extirpation by means of soap and water. I say that ridicule is the *only* weapon left to rational men. No one wishes to persecute the miracle-mongers now. They, ere their teeth were drawn and their claws cut, did persecute. They tortured horribly and burnt alive those who refused to believe in their bleeding wafers and winking pictures. These rags and bones and rattletraps are the lures and springes and baubles of the SPANISH INQUISITION, which during the three hundred

and forty-one years of its abominable existence sowed death, terror, and desolation broadcast through a magnificent empire—which forced three millions of industrious and peaceable people into exile—which pronounced three hundred and forty-seven thousand individual judgments, in virtue of which—to say nothing of the hideous tortures inflicted in secret—thirty-four thousand persons were burnt alive, eighteen thousand burnt in effigy, and two hundred and ninety thousand sent to the galleys, scourged, branded, or flung for life into loathsome dungeons.

This was the Inquisition, that had its root at Madrid, its branches at Lima, at Mexico, at Lisbon, at Goa—which has its palace and its staff of familiars and spies in Rome at this very day; and but that its teeth are drawn and its claws are cut—please Heaven, for good!—would burn and torture as it did of yore. Do you know when the last *auto da fé* took place? Just before Henry Brougham was born. Do you know that, restored by Ferdinand, the Inquisition flourished in Madrid until the year 1823? We talk of it in England lightly as a bugbear, but had it not been for two brave admirals and a great storm which dispersed the Invincible Armada, we might be weighed down by the effects of an English Inquisition even now. The Spaniard is yet weak in the knees and dizzy in the head, like a strong man who has been poisoned in his youth, from its baleful influence. The apathy of the Spanish people, their taciturnity, their uncommunica-

tiveness, their ignorance—I speak of the lower classes —their melancholy, the gloomy delight they take in the cruel spectacle of the bull-fight, are all to be traced, as directly as the political fanaticism of New England is to be traced to the religious fanaticism of the Pilgrim Fathers, to their three hundred and forty-one years' thraldom under a despotism which was no bugbear, but a real incubus, and ulcer and a gag, the first conditions of whose existence were cruelty, treachery, and fraud; which paralysed men's minds; which set the husband against the wife, and prompted the son to denounce the mother who bore him.

And am I expected to speak with reverence, or even common respect, of these wretched cock-horses and gewgaws which the crafty priests carried, as a sportsman carries a bit of wood covered with spangles to daze larks—larks to be duly spitted and roasted!—am I to be debarred from speaking with so much scorn as I can of the Relicario at this Escorial, where there are over seven thousand bits of the bones of saints; ten whole bodies; a hundred and forty-four heads; three hundred and six arms and legs entire; *to say nothing of one of the real bars of St. Lawrence's gridiron, his thigh-bone, portions of his flesh roasted and boiled* (tostado y asado), *and one of his feet, with a bit of coal between the toes!* These precious tit-bits were once kept in a gorgeous shrine, called the *Arca del Monumento*, which was decorated, moreover, with twenty-six invaluable Greek cameos. The French came along

in 1808, and perpetrated here one of the wittiest bits of cynicism I have ever heard of, even amongst this witty and cynical nation. They stole the shrine and they stole the cameos, but they left the relics tied up in a table-cloth, with a polite note to the prior of the convent of St. Lorenzo, begging his acceptance *de ces objets précieux*, and expressing their devout hope that, if the relics really possessed miraculous virtues, a new *Arca del Monumento*, with a complete set of cameos, would soon grow round St. Lorenzo's holy toes.

The set has failed to grow, however, and the relics are no longer shown. Even the dingy old sexton could not forbear from grinning as he related this anecdote. "*Muy puerco Frances*," was his comment on the proceeding. I preserve a pleasant memory of this sacristy, for the sake of the magnificent Venice looking-glasses with which it is decorated. There is one full fifteen feet in height and ten feet across, with a frame of crystal cut into wreaths of fruit and flowers, which they would not venture to make at Murano now-a-days. It is of the deepest *rilievo* possible, yet some of the leaves and tendrils are as sharp and fine as though they were of spun glass. There are more Venetian mirrors—one, a present to Philip II., from the Signory of Venice, with a frame, representing a Corinthian entablature and columns, all made out in gems and rare marble, which, but for a wholesome fear of the Presidio at Alcalá, I should have liked to carry off bodily. Honour to the memory of the Signory of Venice! They made

such capital looking-glasses, and they would never suffer the Holy Inquisition within their sea-girt city.

These mirrors, too, gave some kind of life and spirit to this cold and cheerless place, whose fresco paintings even, bright-hued as they are, look deadly-lively, like the kindred performances on the coffins of mummies and the walls of Egyptian tombs. There is in the British Museum, on the breast of a half-unpacked mummy, the miniature portrait of a Princess Keolanthe, the daughter of some Rameses or Thothmes many centuries defunct. It is so fresh, so delicate, so coquettish, that you might fancy it was painted only yesterday by Richmond or Thorburn. But, turn your eyes to the foot of that bale of sacking and cerecloths, and you will see the grizzly bones of the Princess Keolanthe's toes peeping out from the swaddling bands. Therefrom arises an effect purely Escorialesque. The Venice looking-glasses made me for a moment forget that this was after all only a huge museum of mummies, of dead kings, a dead age, a dead policy, and an all-but-dead nation. There was something human, too, to see on one of the huge oaken presses—they looked very like kitchen dressers—a damp towel, a comb, and a pale yellow tablet labelled "Cleaver's Honey Soap." They have an early mass in the High Chapel, and the priest who had served this morning, and had sacrificed to the Graces here, was evidently something of an exquisite. It was only a bit of soap from a street out of Holborn, and, may be, the trade mark was forged. Yet it seemed

a kind of link between you and home; you looked on it as an old familiar friend, as you would were you to find a pewter pot with Guinness's mark in the middle of the great desert of Sahara.

I am not learned in ecclesiology, and scarcely know an apse from an ante-chapel; but in most of the churches I have visited, either in England or the continent, the choir has been close to the chancel and the altar. In the church of the Escorial the arrangement of the choir is curiously different. It is put away, beyond the nave, at the western extremity of the edifice, and the huge chamber it forms is some fifty feet higher than the pavement of the church itself. How certain ecclesiastical ceremonies—the enthronisation of an archbishop, for instance—could have taken place, when the canons and presbyters were installed above and the throne and altar were below, puzzles me. There must have been endless marchings and counter-marchings upstairs and downstairs, and these may after all have been considered advantageous to the *funcion*.

To look down on the great bare church beneath, is very strange. It presented very possibly a more stirring appearance three centuries since, when nave and aisles were filled by the noble gentlemen and devout people of Spain. What a rustling of velvets and silks and satins, what a swaying of plumed hats, what a glancing of gold chains and diamond badges, what a jingling of rapiers and daggers, there must have been when the courtly crowd made way for the pro-

cessions; how the poor country worshippers in the aisles must have stared and crossed themselves to see so many candles, jewelled crosses, and embroidered banners! Then must the work of the *bordadores en oro* have come out from the dark drawers; then must the great cope, valued at forty-five thousand pounds—four millions and a half of reals—have seen the light. We look down, now, only on a cold, dank vault, more suggestive of rheumatism than of anything else I know. I remember now that I am on a level with the oratorio, a kind of tribune or private box—the "closet" of our old chapels royal—in which the king heard mass. Philip II. could hear it from the miserable room close by where he expired. He was in his oratorio when a messenger, cautiously opening the door, brought him the despatch announcing the victory of Lepanto. He was in his oratorio when they brought him the news of the defeat of the Armada. Nor victory nor defeat moved him. He went on. A remarkable man, this; fervent and steadfast, and one to whom must be at least conceded the merit of sincerity. But he was the grandson of Crazy Jane; and, on the whole, it may be more charitable to infer that he was as cracked as his grandmother.

I wish they had put the choir downstairs. The good carved oak and Spanish chestnut of the triple tiers of stalls would have warmed up that most shivery-shakery of fanes somewhat. The organ, too, is a noble piece of work, rows of pipes radiating from it horizontally, like

so many arquebuses pointed at you. In the centre of the choir there is an elephantine lectern, weighing six tons, but moving very easily indeed on a pivot, and on its ledges repose the books used by the choristers. The volumes are about six feet in height by four in breadth, bound in that famous yellow leather of Cordova, and heavily clasped and clamped with brass. The parchment pages, every one as big as the lease of the Castle of Otranto or Mrs. Shandy's marriage-settlement, have the staves ruled blood-red, and on them rest or rather ride the notes. Such notes! such quadrangular blotches of glistening carbon! I can only compare them to the black patches which, before glass eyes came in, were worn by those bereft of sight. Every crotchet is as big as a blackthorn walking-stick with a knob at the end fit to crack the head of Goliah. As for the words beneath the notes, so monstrous were those black-letter achievements that, turning the crackling parchments over, it seemed that "Non" took up one page, and "nobis" two, and "Domine" half-a-dozen. On the whole, these grim, red-ruled books would have stood in admirable stead to the giant Fee-faw-fum, when he practised that celebrated ballad in which he described having sucked the blood of an Englishman. I never saw such books out of a pantomime, in which all the "properties" are of exaggerated proportions. It was intended, no doubt, that all the assistants of the crowded choir, from its remotest extremities, should be able to read the music as they sang.

What a volume of sound must have gone up to those vaulted roofs when all the triple tiers were full of stalwart priests, with hearts devout and lungs of leather, and the great organ of Masigeles *y sus hijos* pealed out in thunderous strain! Do you remember the grand old hymn, "Jerusalem, my happy home"? The earnest, fervid Spanish worshippers of those days, their senses carried away, and looking through the clouds of incense at the ceiling on which the "Abodes of Heavenly Bliss" are painted, may have sung out strong and loud with the old poet,

> "In There no sickness may be seene,
> No hurt, no ache, no sore—
> There is no Deathe and no Deville,
> But Life for ever more."

Up there, amid the legions of winged and harped angels, the cinnamon and sugar grow. There the nard and balm abound. There crowned David is "master of the gueere," and "Our Lady sings Magnificat," with myriads of virgins "sitting about her feete." "Te Deum," sings St. Ambrose; St. Austin does the like; and old Simeon and Zachary join in; Magdalen has forgotten her moan, and carols cheerfully; Rachel has left off weeping, and trills sweet melody. They are all there on the ceiling, with harp, lute, and psaltery, in bliss, singing away for ever and ever.

It is hard to come back to the year eighteen sixty-six and find the clouds of incense melted away, and the triple tiers of stalls untenanted, and to look down on

the blear, aguish vault, smelling of quenched candle-ends and stale holy water, and then to be told that the blissful frescoes above were mainly painted by the incontinent Italian nicknamed Luca Fa Presto—vapidest of sacred scene-painters, with whom an altar-piece at the Escorial was a "little country job;" who seemed to stencil his saints, and shake feather beds upon the wet plaster for angels' wings—who painted acres of Holy Writ for Philip, and boasted that he had done all his work at the Escorial, and pocketed the ducats, in thirty-seven days. A man with a flux of carnations and draperies—this Luke the Labourer who never wearied, and whose works now are about as valuable as those of Benjamin West or Raphael Mengs.

## CHAPTER XV.

THE PANTHEON OF THE ESCORIAL AND ITS TWENTY-SIX SARCOPHAGI — THE LIBRARY AND ITS MISSALS AND MANUSCRIPTS.

THE reader who has followed my description of the Escorial must be told that for very many paragraphs I have been keeping him with one foot in the grave. Yes, we have been on the brink of the tomb—a kingdom's dust lies sepulchred below. The sacristan lights a row of wax tapers and distributes them among our party. Then he rattles his biggest bunch of keys portentously. In Indian file, bearing the candles, flaring and dropping yellow tears, we will now, if you please, follow him down to the dead-house, which, in the oddest incongruity of nomenclature I ever heard, is called the "Pantheon." This must be due to one of two things: either the Spaniards do not comprehend what Pantheon really means, or they coolly assume that their dead kings and queens are gods. If George II. was descended from the mythical deities of the Walhalla, why should not the scions of Ferdinand and Isabella be sprung from the divinities of Mount

Olympus? The Queen of Spain's legs, concerning which no well-bred *caballero* presumes to talk, may be, after all, the Pillars of Hercules. The walls of the staircase leading to the royal tomb-house are of the rarest marbles, exquisitely polished. They just serve now to reflect the flare of the tapers; otherwise they are about as useful as a sun-dial would be in a coffin. Down you go by smooth steps to a huge octagonal vault, dimly lit from above, and fitted with shelves in triple tier, where, in sarcophagi of shining granite, continue peacefully to moulder the bones of many kings and queens of Spain and the Indies. There are twenty-six urns, or sarcophagi, or jars; there should be forty, then Morgiana might have had a chance.

Charles V. is here, quite quiet and subdued. Evil tidings from the Low Countries disturb him no longer. Fractious Bruges and turbulent Ghent are nothing to him now; he is even careless of the wealth of Mexico and the crown of the Holy Roman Empire. The eye of the mind strives to pierce through the thick walls of the stone chest they have laid him in, and picture, wrapped in the monastic cowl and frock which were his graveclothes, the scant relics of the Emperor and King, the Lord of Incas and Caciques, the master of Flanders, the extirpator of heretics—the poor gouty old man and bungling watchmaker, who died tired and broken down at Trieste, whimpering with dread lest his orthodox son Philip should one day denounce his father's name to the Inquisition for his bygone naughtinesses to the

Pope. Underneath Charles lies Philip, quiet as a lamb. Lepanto and the Invincible Armada, *autos da fé* and expulsion of the Moors, roguery and intrigue, king-craft and priestcraft, have lost their quickening spell to him. For hours, and with lungs as stentorian as those of the poor flying stationers who cry "*la Iberia*" and "*la Salud Publica*" on the Puerta del Sol till two in the morning, you might read despatches, and bulls, and warrants, and proclamations, and Philip the Second would never hear. This is the real *Sala de los Secretos;* not the monks' gossip-shop above. Here, in this show-room of Silence and Death, are the only secrets which are never revealed.

The Pantheon is reserved for kings and queens. Mere princes and princesses lie in a tomb hard by. All the sovereigns who have reigned since Charles are in the Pantheon, save only Philip V. and Mrs. P., who are at La Granja, and Ferdinand VI. and Mrs. F., who deign to decay at Madrid. There are always, of course, a number of vacant urns waiting for occupants. On one of these tiers that was to be—for strict precedence is followed on the shelves—it is said that Maria Luisa, another wife of Philip—the pretty Queen who was so jealous of the prettier Duchess of Alba—scratched her own name with a pair of scissors. Queen Isabella when she visits the Escorial never fails to have a midnight mass performed in the Pantheon. Her Majesty inspects the sarcophagus which in process of time—may it be long distant!—is destined to receive

her own royal remains. Destined, I say—perhaps. Now-a-days, what monarch can tell where he or she shall be buried?

That most miserable of tyrants and impostors, Ferdinand VII., who never took an oath that he did not break, or used a friend that he did not betray, and who died at last in a rage at not being able to cheat Death, was very fond of pottering about the Pantheon at the Escorial, and peeping into the particular hole into which his body was one day to be thrust. His royal ancestors had shown an analogous partiality for holding holidays in their family vault. One, you will remember, caused the service for the dead to be performed over himself before he was dead. He was laid out, and packed on a bier under a catafalque, and the monks sang the *Dies Iræ* and the *Requiem* over him. I have heard of Spanish children playing at bull-fighting, just as little Southern boys play at hanging Yankees; but playing at death and burial would appear an amusement peculiar to the monarchy of Spain. In the case of the morbid Charles the deities of Propriety and Congruity vindicated themselves by causing him, as he lay in his premature shroud, to catch so violent a cold that he speedily and indeed died of it. It must be very nice, this playing at undertaking, else such tremendous personages as your Charleses and Philips would not have patronised it. To be consistent, they might have rehearsed another performance, with a little fire and some brimstone; but will any

physiologist or psychologist explain to me the meaning of this partiality of royal people for bone-grubbing and haunting charnel-houses, and polishing up coffin plates, and smelling grave earth? Does it benefit the survivor? Does it do the dead any good? The causes must be transcendental, and are decidedly above my ken.

There is but little need to talk about the decoration of this Pantheon, which is directly under the high altar of the royal chapel, or to tell you that the precious marbles are from Toledo and Torrosa and Biscay. The Pantheon is a chapel in itself, and has an altar heavy with ungainly splendour designed by two Hieronymite monks. The Most Catholic kings were certainly lavish in their use of altars. They had them at home, and they had them abroad. There were campaign altars, hunting altars, and pocket altars. Perhaps it would not be too much to infer that the Most Catholic kings were in a chronic state of apprehension of being carried away by the devil; and that they consequently did their best to "dodge" the enemy of mankind, and especially of kingkind, in every conceivable manner. I don't know whether there is an altar in the Infantes' Pantheon, an adjacent charnel-house, up a few steps as you leave the Tomb of the Kings. Through the gilt bronze railings we could only see blackness. The *custode* declined to admit us to this vault. Everything there, he said very coolly, was rotting, and not fit for *caballeros* to see. The Infantes' vault is, indeed, commonly known by the revolting name of *el Pudridero*.

Here, in horrible confusion, are crammed nearly a hundred bodies of princes and princesses, and even of queens whose sons did not reign. Isabella of Valois, and Maria of Portugal; Lord Russell's Don Carlos, and Charles the Fifth's Don John of Austria; the natural son of the Grand Monarque, the Duke of Vendôme; and the poor little baby who, only the other day styled a *robusto infante* by the official papers, is now the latest tenant of *el Pudridero;* all lie here together.

Abating peril from foul smells and mephitic gases one would like to enter this vault. There you might at once realize all that Jeremy Taylor has said concerning the sepulchre of kings. There you might see the "proud Hidalgo with his backbone full of serpents," and the "young German person of quality very ghastly, with over twenty yards of worms coming from his eyes." What things are hidden by doors and gilt bronze railings, to be sure! This *Pudridero* must be as loathsome a place as that old Golgotha at St. Anne's, Soho, which "Graveyard Walker" denounced; yet it has been ere now the subject of loyal aspirations. The byeblows of monarchs have intrigued to find sepulture here. Don John of Austria, Charles's son, entreated with his dying breath that his bones might rest in the *Pudridero,* "as the fittest reward for his services." They brought him from Namur accordingly, and put him among the infantes. It is a far cry from Flanders to the Escorial. Better to have buried the Great Bastard quietly under the walls of Namur, "at

the gate of St. Nicholas, in one of the traverses, about thirty toises from the returning angle of the trench, opposite to the salient of the demi-bastion of St. Roch." It was at that precise spot, you will remember, that my Uncle Toby got his wound.

Composite order; designs by the Marquis Crescenti; inscription over the portal beginning, "*Locus sacer mortalibus exuviis;*" Roman statues allegorical of Nature and Hope; Pantheon thirty-six feet diameter, cupola thirty-eight feet high—these are particulars which I ought, perhaps, to have mentioned ere now; but they and kindred details may be, I imagine, dispensed with. Enough that all these Dons are very dead indeed, and that they can do humanity no more mischief.

We saw the library of the Escorial. It is situated in the convent part of the building, into which you pass from the church by a vestibule called the Sala de Secretos, so called because the softest utterances can be heard from the opposite angles. St. Paul's has its whispering gallery, and the alcoves of old Westminster bridge had their echoes, and it was fitting that the eighth wonder of the world should also possess its acoustic phenomenon; but it strikes me that the Hall of Secrets is rather a misnomer. This inconveniently resonant vestibule should merely be a hall where secrets are *not* spoken, or even muttered, seeing that an angle of the wall might carry the matter. Friar Pepe, for instance, whispering his private opinion of the reverend sub-prior to friar Juan, might have got into serious

trouble had he chosen this place for a gossip shop. There is an *in pace*, I suppose, for refractory monks in the Escorial, not shown to the *extranjeros;* and Philip II. was too orthodox a sovereign to have interfered with the administration, even to extremity, of monastic discipline.

This library is a glorious old hall, two hundred feet in length perhaps; but my calculations in this palace of the Titans are growing wild. It is only when you have spent five hours in tramping over the Escorial that you can begin to realize the idea of its vastness. The place is all cubic—a sublimation of the cube root. They say the Escorial covers five hundred thousand feet of ground, and cost thirty shillings a foot to build and decorate. The library was once one of the richest in Europe; but the French have been here, to say which is enough. They carried off as many of the books as they could, and burnt the rest in the Patio de los Reyes. Who said that Alaric was King of the Goths? The real king of that nation was Marshal Bessières. Who said that Attila was the "Scourge of God?" The real scourge was Marshal Soult. The monks of San Lorenzo, however, managed to save some of the books; a few additions have been since made, and there are now about fifty-six thousand volumes, with some rare manuscripts. There is a wonderful Koran, in Arabic, captured at the battle of Lepanto; an ancient Greek Bible which belonged to the Emperor Cantacuzene, and some princely editions of the classics.

Most of the older books are bound in the sumptuous purple and black leather of Cordova and Valladolid, and the more modern ones in vellum; but as in the majority of instances the titles are printed, not on the back but on the front of the gilded leaves, the books are turned right about face, and the cases look more like goldsmiths' cabinets than book-shelves.

There are splendid tables here of dark polished marble provided for readers—rather cold for a student's elbows, I should imagine; but I saw no traces either of readers, transcribers, librarians, or catalogues; nor was there so much as a pen, or ink, or a scrap of paper from one end of the library to the other. The books are very securely locked up behind strong gratings of brass wire, and learning peeps at you in a piteous manner from its cage, like Sterne's starling. "I can't get out" is a melancholy sound to hear, but the French got in here once too often; and I don't wonder that the Spaniards of to-day are chary about showing their treasures except behind bars. It is with infinite reluctance that sacristans, even when heavily feed, or authorized by a distinct command from their superiors, will exhibit to a stranger anything which, being sold, would be actually convertible into hard dollars. These sacristans seem all cousins-german of my friend at Vera Cruz who drew his pistol before he cashed my letter of credit. They must fancy every *extranjero* to be a Frenchman, and infer that, directly he has set his eyes on a gold cup or a jewelled pyx, he will forthwith

proceed to brain the *custode* and appropriate the valuables. We hear a good deal of the French marshals in Spain, but really it would seem that the two most notable commanders of the Gallic hosts in the Peninsula were an ancestor of the "Velvet Lad" of Cornhill jewel robbery fame, and a descendant of Colonel Blood of Tower of London memory. "*A rapacitate Francorum liberatus*, A.D. 1814," is a common inscription to be found on the flyleaves of precious old Spanish missals and illuminated MSS. which were gratuitously rescued at the peace from the clutch of the much-plundering Gaul.

At our earnest request, backed by a slight *gratificacion* —the Spaniards *may* be mercenary and corrupt, but in their show-places they are not a tithe so rapacious as the Dutch and Flemish—the old *custode* unlocked a closet, peeping into which I could see a confused heap of brooms, dusters, candlesticks, logs of firewood, and books in dimly-gorgeous binding. Then he showed us a wonderfully-illuminated missal of the eleventh century, the Four Gospels written in letters of gold, and some twelfth and thirteenth century miniatures on vellum, from German and French *scriptoria*, which would have made the hearts of Messrs. Digby Wyatt and Owen Jones leap again. But I daresay these true artists have seen these exquisite art treasures in their time, and mourned over the obscurity and neglect to which they are doomed. There were cunning borders and initial letters here, wondrous interlayings of birds, and fruits, and flowers,

as rich and delicate as any in the "Durham Book," or the "Hours of Queen Berengaria;" but the *custode* handled them just as a second-hand furniture broker in Gray's Inn Lane would handle his limp account-book to see how many weeks in arrear Mrs. Tubbs, of Fulwood's Rents, was in her instalments on account of the turn-up bedstead. He looked at them without interest and without admiration. "*Muy viejo*" (very old), he remarked, and huddled them into the closet again. I suppose he had a dim kind of notion that they were valuable, and that it would be as well not to use them as the old parish clerks in England were wont to use wills—singeing geese with them. The rarer missals being fortunately illuminated on parchment, the leaves could not well be twisted up for *cigaritos*.

There are some portraits of learned Spaniards in this library: among others one of Juan de Herrera, the *ayudante* or foreman of the first architect of Toledo, who at the death of the latter succeeded to the post of chief director of the works of the Real Fabrica. He was aided by one Villacastin, a friar; but Herrera was in truth the real architect of the Escorial. The French, with their customary lively impudence, have claimed the eighth *maravilla del mundo* as the creation of one of their countrymen, and the latest French guide-books name a certain Louis de Foix as the designer of the whole pile. Mr. Ford docks the "De" from his name, and says that "Foix" was a journeyman builder, and carried a hod at the Escorial. Foix

or Herrera, Villacastin or Battista de Toledo, Inigo Jones or Teddy the Tiler—at this time of day, perhaps, it does not much matter. Long since all these famous house-builders have gone to dust; their clay has been moulded and baked into bricks—their bones burnt into lime for the mortar with which our bran-new houses are stuck together. The Temple of Fame we make such a pother over is but a Vauxhall orchestra kind of building after all; and names which once filled the world with a trumpet sound, now only fill a pale niche in the pages of a guide-book. How we yawn over the guide-book celebrities! How bald and jejune iteration makes them! How, at last, Titian and Raffaelle, and the "Correggiosity of Corregio," are merged in a maze of calm bewilderment akin to that of the old house-keeper showing the pictures, who said that, "My lord had told her that a certain work was by Paul Very Uneasy; but what he was uneasy about she really didn't know."

## CHAPTER XVI.

FROM MADRID TO CORDOVA — LUGGAGE — A RAILWAY WAITING-ROOM IN RUIN—TRAVELLERS WAITING FOR THE TRAIN.

I BEGAN my journey to Cordova by starting one Saturday night from the terminus of the Alicante railway at Madrid for Alcazar. I was uneasily aware that the reign of pleasant shams and make-believes was at an end, and that I was about to make acquaintance with the real, uncivilized Spain. Yet a couple of days previously I had paid a visit to the diligence-office—most abhorred of words—in the Calle de Alcalá at Madrid. Only part of the journey south can be performed by railway. There is an ugly break, about sixty miles long, between Madrid and Cordova. The line is, indeed, made throughout, and I have conversed with a gentleman who, in the company of the Minister del Fomento, or public works, has travelled by rail all the way from Cadiz by Seville, Cordova, and Madrid to Barcelona. But the line is not yet completely open to the public. All the mountain bridges, they say, were carried away by the torrents last year, and they are not mended yet. Perhaps the Government do not wish to

ruin the trade of the diligences too suddenly. Perhaps —and this is the likelier theory—the railway companies have not got the money to put their roads in working order. The Spaniards decline to invest a penny; the French speculators have spent all their own funds; and were you to ask an English capitalist to "go into a good thing in railways," he would answer that he did not approve of "the Spanish," and inquire "How about those coupons?" The five hundred franc shares of this particular railway between Madrid and Cordova are quoted now on the Madrid Bolsa—they wont condescend to quote them at all out of Spain—at forty-five francs.

I had my choice between three evils—that is to say, three lines of stage coaches—the "Norte y Mediodia," the "Cordobesa," and the "Victoria." I chose the latter, for patriotic reasons, of course, and on payment of two hundred and sixty-five reals, including the railway fare, secured a place in the *berlina*, or *coupé*, as far as Cordova. It happened that the gentleman who was to have been my travelling companion was, on the very morning of our intended departure, recalled to England. He had taken his ticket, as I had, and paid his fare. There was no alternative but to forfeit both. "La Victoria" could not be brought to see the possibility of disgorging hard dollars once pocketed; but, after much persuasion, consented to refund the amount paid for the railway—a hundred reals—which was very kind on the part of the "Victoria," seeing that it is only at the

last moment that the *mayoral* or conductor of the diligence takes the tickets for the passengers who are booked by his conveyance, and that unless a traveller starts there is nothing to pay. I was a gainer, however, by this settlement of the affair, for my friend insisted that, if he could not get back his money, the place in the *coupé* he had taken should at least be transferred to me. Thus I found myself, in virtue of my ticket, two travellers at once; and to enjoy a double seat in a Spanish stage coach is, I can assure you, no mean privilege.

The "Victoria" was good enough to send for my luggage about four hours before the train started; but by this time the weasel had become very wakeful indeed, and his eyebrows were not to be shaven. I recited to the bitter disappointment of the *mozo* who came for my trunks, the magic formula, "*No tengo, no tengo bultos, no tengo equipage, no tengo nada,*" which I had carefully studied out of Ollendorf, and which meant that I hadn't any luggage. I had been already mulct in the sum of thirty-five francs for the conveyance of one moderately-sized portmanteau from Paris to Madrid, the which, added to the sums I had previously paid for its passage through France and Germany, made up a sum which I calculated to be precisely three and a half times more than the portmanteau and its contents were worth. I was determined that the Madrid and Cordova railway should not aggravate the figure, so I left my portmanteau at the Fonda de los

Principes, to await my return; while I lived at large on a travelling-bag with a square mouth. It is astonishing how much those wide-mouthed bags will hold; or rather, it is astonishing to find with what a slight amount of *impedimenta* you can really manage to get on if you set your mind to it. Two or three suits of clothes, ditto pairs of boots, a morocco dressing-case, plenty of fine linen, your oil and water colours, camp stool, and easel, a stereoscope, a microscope, an india-rubber bath, a complete set of the Fathers, and Dr. William Smith's dictionaries —stay, and a Westley Richards, for Andalusia abounds with wild fowl, and your uniform as Lieutenant in the Dumbledowndeary Volunteers, in case the Captain-General should ask you to dinner—these, perhaps, you might have some slight difficulty in bestowing in a travelling-bag, unless its mouth was as wide as that of the Thames. But when you are sensible enough to come down to half-a-dozen collars, a comb and brush, a toothbrush, and a phial of chlorodyne, not forgetting Sir Charles Napier's essentials, "two towels and a bit of soap," you will fill your wide-mouthed bag as roomy as the vasty deep.

There is that plaguey dress suit to be sure, for people will ask you to dinner, and all the world over will expect you to come in undertaker costume; but with proper management even that difficulty may be surmounted. Albert Smith once devised a dress suit for travelling purposes, made of black alpaca, so thin that it might be conveniently bestowed in the compass of a sandwich box; but it did not occur to him that if a

man goes out to dinner in a suit of cobweb he must, if he wishes to avoid catching his death of cold, wear an extra set of woollen underneath, and that the extra woollens will take up as much room as a suit of broadcloth. It is the old story over again of the goodwife who made the big hole in the barn-door for the hens to pass through, and the small one for the chickens. The plan I would recommend is this: Strap up your dress coat and continuations *inside your railway rugs*—taking care not to leave them behind in the carriage when you unstrap them—*and wear your dress waistcoat* "all the time," as the Yankees say. If you are cold, button up, or wear a woollen polka jacket over your vest. If you find your dress waistcoat look travel-stained, ink it. Dress clothes, like well made up belles, scarcely ever look badly by candlelight, however old they may be. As for the white choker, writing-paper is cheap even in Spain; or, if you prefer a limp cravat, a cambric pocket-handkerchief, neatly folded, is the easiest of neck pillories. I learnt these "wrinkles," as Mr. Ford would call them, from a country actor, who, with two cylinders of brown paper attached to a pair of bluchers, could manufacture admirable top-boots, and who declared that Desdemona in yellow-glazed calico was—by candlelight—quite as impressive as Desdemona in yellow satin.

I hope these counsels may not be held impertinent; nay, I am bold enough to think that he who succeeds in pointing out how the heavy incubus of continental

luggage may be lightened is, in some sense, a public benefactor. Those who are in the habit of travelling with ladies will at once understand my meaning. "My dear," Benedict, bound perhaps only to Southend, ventures to remonstrate, "don't you think you could do with less than three large trunks full of dresses? The extra weight, I assure you, will be enormous." "It isn't my dresses that make the extra weight," cries Mrs. Beatrix, wrathfully. "It's your nasty rubbishing books and things." Unhappy man! you are conscious only of a diamond edition of Shakspeare, a duodecimo Béranger, and a meerschaum pipe nestling in the corner of one of the big trunks.

It would be dangerous to bring Mrs. Beatrix to Madrid, for this among many other reasons. The trunk-makers there expose for public sale a most monstrous coffer—bigger than the box with the spring lock in which Ginevra was entombed—bigger than the chest Mr. Emmanuel made for Prince Alfred when he first went to sea—bigger even than the Saratoga trunks, which, to the despair of their husbands and fathers, the American ladies carry about with them. This preposterous box is called, appropriately enough, *un mundo*—a world. I tremble when I look upon one of those *mundos*. I dream of travelling to Seville with, say, two or three of them, and having to pay a thousand reals for extra weight. This is why I have dwelt so strongly on the necessity of thinning luggage. Travel with little—travel with none. Think of the *mundos*.

What baggage, pray, had the Rev. Lawrence Sterne with him when he journeyed to France and Italy? Only six shirts and a pair of black silk breeches. Yet was that slenderly appointed tourist destined to compose the "Sentimental Journey"—the most charming book of travels that has ever been written.

I ought to mention that I had been impressively informed at the office of the "Victoria" that I must leave my hotel for the railway station not a moment later than half-past seven. The same warning was written on my ticket. I contrived, after a hasty dinner, to reach the terminus at a quarter to eight. The train left precisely at nine. As I have already remarked, Spain is not a country to which you should come to grumble. *C'est comme vous voyez.* You must put up with *los costumbres del pais.* Time in this country may be meant for slaves, for *extranjeros,* for madmen, but decidedly it is not meant for Spaniards. There is no hurry. What is an hour and a half? You just ascertain that your supply of wax matches is sufficient, and that your cigar-case is full, and then you wrap yourself up and moon. I am ashamed to think how I grumbled at Rouse's Point, and St. Alban's, and Essex Junction, and how I slandered the virtuous Myers. Why didn't I moon? I have written while waiting for things in this country a five-act tragedy, a three-volume novel, an epic poem, and a theory of gravitation. I have painted a picture of the lunar solstice, and carved a group of Diana kissing Endymion, illuminated the Vul-

gate on vellum, and embroidered three open-work petticoats—all in the moon. These *obras de lujo* will be published—*mañana.*

The arrangements of a Spanish railway station, as I remarked in my account of the Escorial, are peculiar. They are thoroughly Spanish; that is to say, thoroughly unlike anything else in the world. There is no newspaper or bookstall, no refreshment-room, and no one to give you any information. The waiting-rooms are not opened until shortly before the starting of the train; there are no benches in the outer hall; and the best thing you can do is to lay your railway rug on the cleanest spot on the floor you can find, squat down, light up your cigar, and moon till the hutch for the sale of tickets opens. At the Alicante terminus, first, second, and third class tickets are dispensed from the same hutch. The last-named class of carriages are the equipages of soldiers and peasants, who, as to luggage, very wisely follow the course I have pointed out, and carry it in their hands. But as the burden frequently includes a jar or a gourd of water, a bundle of blankets, a baby, a pot and a pan or so, a basket of provisions, and, in some cases, a mattress, to say nothing of muskets, swords, knapsacks, and canteens, it is no easy matter to get close enough to the hutch to obtain a ticket. There may be persons, too, who object to the smell of garlic, with which delightful esculent the assemblage are highly flavoured. I boldly avow that I *don't* object to it. When I am in a land of

garlic, and alone, I eat garlic, and with that mote in my eye have nothing to do with the beam in my brother's. That every one should be smoking, also, is a fact which constantly recorded can only prove wearisome. It is *un costumbre del pais.* The priest smokes as soon as he is through with his mass; the soldier smokes; the schoolboy smokes; the criminal smokes on his way to the scaffold.

This railway company must surely be in a bad way. The solitary waiting-room was a most miserable hole—the door off its hinges, the range rusting in the fireplace, the garish French paper stripped from the walls, the windows looking on the platform all broken, the tiled floor half untiled and showing the bare earth. There was not a chair or a table, and the flaring gas-burner had neither chimney nor globe. I looked in mute interrogation at the solitary ticket-collector, a Frenchman with a bad cold in his head, and muffled up to his eyes in a *cachenez.* He shrugged his shoulders and muttered, "*C'est comme vous voyez.*" I had to wait some twenty minutes before the mayoral of the Cordova diligence—a broad, jovial man, with a scarlet cap and a silken sash, the sign of his office—made his appearance. Then he inspected my ticket. Then the *mozo,* or porter, or cad of the "Victoria," made his appearance, and demanded money for carrying my *equipage,* whereupon I repeated the mystic formula, ending with *no tengo nada.* Then at last I struggled on to the platform, where there were neither guards nor porters, and

got into the first carriage I could find haphazard, in the hope that it belonged to that portion of the train bound towards Cordova. As it was, I happened to have entered a carriage going, not to Cordova *viâ* Venta de Cardenas, but to Valencia and Alicante; fortunately, just before we reached Alcazar, where the line branches off, a good-natured Spanish officer, with whom I had been talking in the early part of the evening, woke me up from a sound slumber and told me I must change my place.

Although the Spanish railway companies are said to be doing such bad business, the trains are always inconveniently crowded, and it is exceedingly difficult to obtain a seat, even in a first-class carriage. There are reasons for this: First, the companies only run two trains a day; next, one or more first-class carriages are always reserved for Government officials or taken in advance by grandees; next, the universality of smoking renders it necessary for carriages to be set apart for ladies, whether there are any ladies to travel by the train or not; next—there are as many nexts in my discourse as in a Presbyterian sermon, when the minister has no scruples about numbering his arguments, and going up to "thirty-seventhly, my brethren"—the companies, being short of money and badly provided with rolling stock, attach as few carriages to the train as they possibly can; and, lastly, so soon as a Spaniard enters a carriage he spreads out his cloak, puts his coat on one seat and his bag on the other, pulls down the

blinds, and draws the little silk curtain over the lamp, in the hope that no one else will enter.

This is but natural. We practise similarly innocent stratagems in England, where I knew a lady who was renowned for the skill and dexterity with which, when travelling per Great Western Railway, she could roll up a China crape shawl into the exact semblance of a child of eight months old just recovered from the measles. It was astonishing to mark how the ill-tempered old gentlemen used to flee from before that China crape infant. You are sure to be unearthed at last, however, in Spain. You are chuckling at having entered a compartment where you can put your legs up, when you see an inquiring head and a pair of glittering eyes peering in at the window. You are found out. The door opens. A tall man appears on the step; spreads out the wings of his coat like a bat, utters the customary *Buenas noches, caballeros,* and brings himself, his cigar, and his cloak to anchor by your side. Spaniards run to great lengths in the way of legs, and the doom of the stout is to be scrunched flat.

On the morrow morning, about one, I think, we got to Alcazar. We should have been there by twelve; but where was the hurry? Through the before-mentioned kindness of the Spanish officer I didn't go on to Alicante, but landed on a platform where I found the temperature piercingly cold. There was a waiting-room—one for all the passengers. It had a vaulted

roof and a tiled floor, and a great pan of burning coke in one corner. There was one bench, which, *de comun acuerdo*, had been given up to three women with babies, and it was quite painful to hear these poor innocents whimpering, and at last boohooing right out with the cold—I suppose it was with the cold, but how are you to tell what a baby means? It is no good being angry with the baby that cries, although that grim woman, whom the Methodists have made into a saint—the mother of the Wesleys—used to boast that she never allowed her children to cry after they were a year old. You cannot help but pity the crying baby—that querulous inarticulate wail—principally because you cannot tell what it is crying for. You, strong, ready-tongued, six feet high, you can bellow out, "I am hungry, I am thirsty. My stomach aches, my toes are cold. I want an inspectorship of schools. I want the governorship of the Windward Islands." But that poor baby can only wail, and turn its tiny head, and fling its puny arms about. Not even the mother, who knows so much, can tell the reason of the moan; but wise surgeon Cheselden found out the cause of many babies' tears, when, dissecting a child, he found the mark of a human thumb and finger, printed as plainly as though made with a butter-stamp, on one of the soft, grisly ribs. And by that discovery Cheselden certainly abrogated one fruitful source of infant suffering, for he brought about a reform in the cruel, barbarous, and ignorant style of nursing which prevailed in the last

century, when women used to hold babies in their hands high in air that they might "crow"—the crow being often one of agony.

The railway waiting-room at Alcazar was certainly very like the robbers' cave in "Gil Blas," divested of all likelihood of your having your throat cut there. Why French engineers should have built such a room in the likeness of a coal-cellar is not easy of explanation, save on the score that arches and vaulted roofs are inherent to the Moorish style of architecture, and that south of Madrid the people, after a lapse of three hundred years, continue to build as the Moors did before them.

We were a hundred travellers, perhaps, gathered round the blazing mass of coke; but there was enough of varied light and shade in those groups to furnish a Rembrandt or a Descamps with *chiaro-'scuro* studies enough to last him a lifetime. When the babies had been hushed to sleep, dead silence reigned. No pert ticking clock disturbed the stillness. The women clasped their hands and rocked themselves dully to and fro; the men gathered their mantles about them and smoked. With but a little stretch of imagination you might have fancied this to be some great company of Christian people taken prisoners by the Paynims, and waiting in stolid resignation for the advent of the butchers and their knives. But there was no peril of Paynims. We were only waiting for a train which didn't come up to its time. These gaunt and sallow

men, with bright kerchiefs bound round their temples and tied in knots and streamers behind, or with their black hair twisted into slender pigtails, which were not allowed to hang down, but were brought in front and attached to a button of the jacket, precisely as the plaited tail of a Cuban dandy's well-groomed pacer is made fast to the saddle—these strange, wild, gipsy-looking creatures, with their earrings, and their heavy silken sashes, their loose gaiters of Cordovan leather, all tags and points, curiously worked, their jackets of shag and velveteen, their long mantles and striped blankets, their hats now round, now peaked, now slouched, who stood leaning on their staves, or bending under huge bundles of needments, were only inoffensive *labradores* and *ganadores*, and *rancheros*—peasants and farmers and cattle-breeders who had never heard of Gil Blas and the robber band, and were thankful for the existence of those *Guardias Civiles* who have purged the Spanish highway from the plague of rapparees.

There was a Dona Leonora, however, among the female part of the company, who might have sat to Le Sage for her portrait. The Spanish old woman is a dreadful creature to look upon. As a *dueña*, in decent black, with a mantilla and a fan, and an austere gentleman-usher walking before her, she was not without a certain stately dignity; but there are no *dueñas* and no gentlemen-ushers now-a-days, and the Spanish old woman stands revealed in a most unpleasant state of unadornment. Take the Nurse in *Juliet*, for instance,

and one of the witches in *Macbeth*; join Mother Shipton and Mr. Southey's Old Woman of Berkeley; add La Mère Cicogne and the Wicked Fairy; flavour with a very old Irish applewoman, the most discontented old female inmate of the Corncutters' Almshouses, and Mr. Thackeray's Dowager Countess of Kew; finish off with the pew-opener at Ebenezer and an *ouvreuse de loges*—one of those jabbering old fiends who worry you about a *petit banc* for your feet—at the Folies Dramatiques; give this personage ten thousand wrinkles, dip her in saffron, and scent her with garlic and tobacco—for she smokes; hunch her back, bow her legs, wither her arms, and splay her feet; give her a white moustache and a chin tuft, and any number of warts sprouting like radishes; make her eyes bloodshot and rheumy with perpetual cowering over the gas-evolving *brasero;* dress her in rags; give her a voice between a snuffle, a mumble, a growl, and a screech; hang a rosary of beads, a crucifix, and some little threepenny-bit blessed medals over one of her shining palms,—then you have the Spanish old woman, to the life. I never saw her equal in France or England, Italy or Germany; but, as Mr. Buckle elected to combine "Spain and Scotland" in the second volume of his "History of Civilization," I may be pardoned for remarking that, substituting a ragged check shawl for the Spanish mantilla, and superadding a strong odour of bad whiskey, one of those horrible old Scotchwomen you see "clavering and havering" at the entrance to

one of the filthy closes in the filthier Canongate of Edinburgh is twin sister to the old woman of Spain. There never was such an old woman to talk. She alone among Spaniards does not shut herself up in "obscure haughtiness." Her "jaw" is perpetual. She would unpeople Philistia with it.

There are three old women who are supposed to do the household work in the Cordovan inn where I write this. Such chambermaids! They have all chaplets of beads in one hand and brooms in the other. I wish their devotion to the first would impress upon them the moral beauty of using the last a little oftener. I never can get my bed made before four o'clock in the afternoon; but those old women are always standing at the stairhead, "jawing" their heads off and flourishing their brooms. They will ride away upon those brooms, I expect, some day, and make a last Walpurgis-nacht of it. The oldest and most hideous of the fearsome trio has, I tremble to record it, taken a fancy to me. She comes to my door and "jaws" tremendously. To get rid of her, I tell her that I do not understand Castilian. She has offered to teach me it. Horror! I have been ill-treated by the sex ever since I was born; but it would be adding an intolerable amount of insult to injury to find myself, in the sere and yellow leaf, the object of a tender feeling in the breast of a Spanish old woman. I remember at Montreal in Canada, once, a very old chambermaid—she must have been a hundred at least—who was an

Indian from Cuagnawagha. This squaw was almost a dwarf, but had a pair of the most lustrous eyes you ever saw. She nearly frightened me into convulsions once by squatting down in the middle of the room, embracing her knees with her hands, and staring at me as if I had been an image. I tried to dance round her, and to conjure her away with incantations culled from Mr. Cooper's novels; but she continued to squat and to stare. What did she mean? I have a dim notion that one of my great grandmothers was a Red Indian, and perhaps the squaw from Cuagnawagha recognised in me a distant kinsman.

## CHAPTER XVII.

FROM MADRID TO CORDOVA—A RAILWAY REFRESHMENT ROOM—AN ENGINE DRIVER AND STOKER—THE VENTA DE CARDENAS—"SALUTE THE COMPANY AND HELP YOURSELF"—A GIPSY ENCAMPMENT.

THE train didn't come up to its time, for an hour after its time, or for an hour after that: but the coke gave out a fierce heat, and I had plenty of furs and rugs, and was quite contented to moon till dawn. You may talk about faces in the fire; but the faces to study here were those round the fire. In more senses than one, the scene was like some misty vision. These weird and strange faces, these uncouth and picturesque costumes, had they been unmixed with features and vestments belonging to ordinary life, would have made me think merely that I was in a foreign country, and among people dressed after the foreign fashions. But side by side with hoods and pigtails, and slouched hats and striped blankets, there was the round beaver of the French bagman, there were *afrancesado* Spaniards dressed out in all the finery of the cheap tailors of Bordeaux and Marseilles. Now and then you came on an unmistakably Spanish female face and form; but

the wearer had forsaken the mantilla, and was crinolined and pork-pie-hatted and Garibaldi-jacketed. One pair of feet you saw were swathed in the sandals, with osier soles, of the Andalusian peasant, or thrust into slippers of undressed hide; the next were daintily shod in bronze kid, with varnished tips and high heels. A feeling of bewilderment comes over you, akin to that which you experience when for the first time you see a Moorish woman, in her snowy *haick* and *serroual*, brushed by the distended skirt of a *cocotte* fresh from the Quartier Bréda.

Two civilizations were conflicting in this waiting-room; but in a flickering, uncertain manner, like the light of a feeble candle against the light of a feeble fire. For the present the candle seemed to have the best of it. The candle was old Spain, drowsy, inactive, unprogressive. It had turned this waiting-room into a cheerless ruin—for of all ruins those of yesterday are the most cheerless—it absorbed the modern dresses with its many-coloured though tattered paraphernalia—it thrust, as it were, 1866 into a corner, and asserted itself as the Spain of three hundred years ago. But a candle is a thing which, being lit, is inevitably doomed to burn itself out. A fire is a thing which, once kindled, may grow very low, but may be fed, may burn up again, may be kept incandescent for ever. The candle of old Spain verges towards the socket. The fire of new Spain has been lit, and must burn up bright some day. The actual railway companies may go bankrupt, the actual

rolling stock may rot; but the railways cannot surely disappear altogether. Once built they must improve; they must eventually succeed; they must bring with them in time all the blessings which rarely fail to follow in their train.

Perhaps it is possible for nations to die altogether—to become wholly extinct and vanish utterly from existence and even memory, like the breath from off a mirror and like the foam from off the sea. There may be no remembrance of the things which have gone before. This Spain is a land of tombs—of dead Iberians, dead Goths, dead Moors—dead Spaniards too. In blind conceit we may imagine that we are reaching perfection; we may be on the brink of supercession and extinction. Something new, something true, may be in preparation which shall devour us and our creeds and our laws, our steam-engines and our telegraphs. What has become of Tyre, and where are the millions of souls who once dwelt in Cordova? They are gone like the people of Nineveh, that great city. And we, too, who boast of setting lessons in civilization to the whole world, are we safe? Shall we go on for ever and ever? The Phœnicians were as deft, the Carthaginians as money-making, the Goths as industrious as we, the Romans were stronger, the Arabs more ingenious than we; and where are they all now? Their time came, and they vanished. You show me the fragment of a Roman column, the skirt of a Roman wall, "potted" as a curiosity for antiquaries. Ay; but what has become

of the ten thousand Roman columns, and the ten million Roman bricks? All the Roman relics in all the museums in the world might be put into the transept of the Crystal Palace. The real wonder is not that so much has been preserved, but that so little remains. What becomes of things?—of clothes and pins, of toys and weapons and household gear—not only those of old Rome or old Spain, but those of our own youth, those of the day before yesterday? You must ask Time, who eats all things. Is there one matron in a hundred who has the dress she wore as a bride? Is there one man in a thousand who knows what has become of his schoolboy outfit? It is the doom of things, and peoples, and systems utterly and entirely to disappear and to be forgotten; and while we are prating of the "four Great Monarchies," and giving a date to creation as though we were all born editors of a universal stationers' almanac, myriads of enormous empires more famous than Persia or Assyria may lie buried in the fathomless sea of oblivion.

One is met, however, by the reminder that there is nothing new under the sun, and that the novelties on which we most pride ourselves are but borrowed—are but adaptations and illustrations of the eternal law of reproduction. The ladies' pork-pie hat, for instance, which I spoke of just now—why that is the identical hat, substituting a cockade for a feather, worn by the Andalusian peasant at this day, and worn by him for I know not how many centuries. But when we ask from

whom he borrowed his hat—medals and bas-reliefs failing us—we drift into the mythical periods. There is another hat, too, very fashionable among young men in England just now—a black hat, with a low semi-circular crown, girt with a garter-like coloured ribbon. This is a hat commonly worn by countryfolks in Spain, and, I have no doubt, owes its introduction to England to military officers who have been in garrison at Gibraltar. Indeed, in Canada, where I first saw this hat worn commonly as a part of "mufti," the garter-like ligament was known as the "brigade ribbon."

I was not fated to remain mooning here all night. The same Spanish officer who had saved me a journey to Alicante, happened to look in, and told me that there was no necessity for continuing to asphyxiate myself with the fumes of railway coke, since there was a *fonda*, or refreshment-room, on the premises. I had discerned no sign of its whereabouts on the platform; no guards had told me anything about it; no vision of white-aproned waiters, as in France, had loomed in the distance, whispering, "*Monsieur a le temps de prendre quelque chose.*" They kept the *fonda* dark, as though it were a reliquary, and were afraid of the French coming to plunder it. I warrant that at Erquellines in Belgium you would very speedily have heard of the existence of the *buffet*. It was not of much account when I did find it out—another apartment of the coal cellar order, but larger, and with a flat roof. The refreshments consisted of chocolate, bread cut into dice, sugared, and fried in

oil, and plenty of cold water. If anything else there were, it was kept so very dark as to be wholly invisible. As I hinted, I had dined but lightly at Madrid, and would have managed perhaps a better supper at half-past two in the morning than was offered by chocolate, fried bread, and cold water. However, I took a sop in the pan and some stodgy but delicious chocolate, and after that a bumper of Adam's ale made one feel quite light-hearted. Did Adam drink only cold water? I can't help fancying that he made that apple into cider.

The *mayoral* of the Victoria was evidently a jolly dog, and was carousing with two chosen boon companions in a warm corner. Each bacchanalian had a canine toothful of some liqueur before him, which every ten minutes or so he sipped with the most artless abandonment. What was it, I wonder—peppermint, cowslip, or ginger wine? The *mayoral* and his friends were hard drinkers. In an opposite corner two men of dark and dismal mien were regaling upon chocolate, and smoking furiously. Their hands and faces were grimed in swart; their apparel was half smoky and half greasy; they conversed in a growling undertone. Salvator Rosa might have painted the one; Gavarni drawn the other for his "propos de Thomas Virloque." Were these grimy men meditating murder, robbery, or a *pronunciamiento?* Not at all. They were a railway driver and stoker just off duty. They were Frenchmen, and as a solitary traveller must needs be either an

eavesdropper, or go melancholy mad, I drew near and listened to their talk.

It was curious. The stoker—a sly, merry-faced fellow beneath his griminess—was reciting to the driver—who was a gaunter, leaner man—a string of the oldest Joe Millerisms you could find out of the "Million d'Anecdotes" by Helani le Gai. He gave them without pretence or circumlocution, one after the other, with the mere preface, "*c'est comme l'autre dont la femme*," or, "*et puis il y avait un autre gredin qui*,"—and then came the Joe Miller. His companion listened with the rapt attention you see in the faces of the fair girls in the story-telling picture called "Comment l'Esprit vient aux filles." At a particularly good Joe he would shrug his shoulders, rub his hands, and writhe upon his chair in hilarious ecstacy; anon I saw him take hold of his grimy head with both hands, and shake it backwards and forwards. The narrator only held him with his glittering eye, as the wedding Ancient Mariner did the wedding guest; and, like a two-years' child, he could not choose but hear. It was good to see these two grimy men, and listen to their simple tale. Swart, and coarse, and garlic-fumed, they were as innocent as little children.

It is a good thing to find out what people talk about. Did you ever take a seat on a bench in the Luxembourg gardens, and slily listen to two red-breeched conscripts? They are always talking about the serjeant-major. Yes, and drummers talk about the drum-major,

and subalterns about the colonel, and clergymen about the bishop. But I most pride myself on having discovered what fiddlers talk about. It was at Milan—at the Cunnobbiana, I think. The stall I occupied was in the range next the orchestra; and I heard one inglorious Paganini, as he was tuning his instrument, murmur to another unrecognised Sivori: "At Bologna the violinists go all to the same café, whereas in this city of dogs and asses—" But I did not want to hear any more. I had the key of the enigma. I had found out what the fiddlers talk about. It is about fiddling.

When at last our long looked-for train lumbered into the station it was pleasant to remark that nobody grumbled—that nobody threatened to write to the papers, or to take postchaises and charge them to the company. A string of dromedaries, perhaps, would have been as easy to procure in this neighbourhood as a postchaise. The prevalent sensation appeared to be one of mild relief, and satisfaction that things were no worse; and, with many *gracias a Dios*, people sensibly proceeded to take the best seats they could find, and make themselves as comfortable as circumstances would permit. Is not this the best way of getting through life? "Don't fash" yourself, a Scot will tell you. The Spaniards have a better piece of counsel, proverbially expressed. Get up as early as you will, they say, the sun will rise earlier.

The second instalment of railway took us beyond Santa Cruz de Mudela, beyond even the old Moorish

town of Almuradid, where we certainly expected the *ferrocarril* to halt, and brought us, to our great joy, to a little place called Venta de Cardenas. It was early dawn when I tumbled out of the train, yawned, shook myself, looked in vain for anybody to tell me where I should go, descended a broken stone staircase, and found myself surrounded by the most magnificent mountain scenery the eye could picture or the imagination conceive. To say that it transcends the view from the railway station at St. Michel, in Savoy, where the diligence brings up after crossing Mont Cenis, is saying a good deal, but it falls far short of the reality. Chain after chain of *sierra* melts away in the distance; but close upon you, too, are abrupt crags and chasms. Nor are the near mountains naked and forbidding. The scenery is more Tyrolese than Alpine, and masses of these colossal slopes are as green as the hills of Vermont. All this country is said to be the scene of Don Quixote's penance; and according to the copious and accurate O'Shea, the Venta de Cardenas is thought to be the identical hostelry to which Cardenio, the curate, and Dorothea brought the penitent knight when—as Mr. Pickwick and his friends persuaded Mr. Tupman to leave his Kentish hermitage—they had induced the Don to leave maceration and meditation, and return to the world. I found the Venta de Cardenas to be only a miserable little half hamlet, made up of the railway station and half-a-dozen straggling cottages. Since I have been in Spain I have received sundry

letters from anonymous friends in England—letters most kindly and courteously written—entreating me to travel in the "footsteps of Don Quixote," not only in La Mancha, but in other districts where he wandered, and record my impressions thereanent. If the Venta de Cardenas is to be taken as a sample, I am afraid I should make very little out of the footsteps of the Don. He was a country gentleman, and Spanish country life is not in my line. The footsteps of Gil Blas suit me better. He was a traveller who saw men and cities—a Ulysses-Sganarelle—and by following him from one great centre of humanity to another much may be learned.

Spanish places of entertainment for man and beast are, I am informed, divided, like Mr. Gladstone's arguments, into three sections: *Fondas, posadas,* and *ventas.* I was by this time almost famishing with hunger, and seeing a decently built house, approached it, tried the door, pushed it open, and walked through room after room entirely denuded of any furniture, or sign of human habitation. Coming out again rather disconsolately, I met a Spanish old woman, whom I took for the landlady until she asked me for a *limosna,* and who informed me that there was no *fonda* at present here, but that there would be one—*mañana.* The cups and saucers and cold-water jars, the chocolate and fried bread, were, I suppose, coming down by the next train. The mention of *mañana,* in the mood of mind I was in, was so exquisitely droll that I thought the best thing

I could do would be to give her two *cuartos* and burst out laughing. Will *mañana* ever come at the Venta de Cardenas, I wonder? The old lady was so overjoyed at the reception of the two *cuartos* that she volunteered the further information that if I walked on some hundred paces I should find a house whereat I could obtain a *desayuno*, literally a breakfast. The *diligencia*, she added, would pass by the door in about half an hour and pick me up. I could not mistake the house: it was the one with the *chimenea*—the chimney.

I walked to a hovel built of loose stones, but prettily tiled, as the meanest hovel is in Spain. The proprietor, who filled up the major part of the doorway, was a handsome-looking man; but, I thought, a haughty one. He was evidently very proud about something—either on the ground that his hovel had a chimney, or that he had on a new pair of velveteen small-clothes. I asked him if his house was a *fonda*, and, with a grave smile, he replied that it was not. I asked him if it was a *posada*, whereat he knit his brows. Terrified, I did not venture to inquire if it was a *venta*, but very humbly sought to know if I could obtain a cup of chocolate. He replied, with distant politeness, that it was possible that *la gente*—his people—would give me what I asked for, and very civilly drew aside to let me pass.

There was another wayfarer, however, who wanted to pass in before me, and would not tarry. This was a very grave and magisterial donkey, with two heavily-laden panniers, who, just bumping a protruding water-

jar against my shin by way of a morning salutation, sedately walked in at the front door and passed into the *patio*, where he proceeded to make a frugal breakfast off an artichoke stump and a broken tile or two. I suppose he lived there, and was the donkey of the house. Having been pretty well broken in to four-footed companionship in Mexico, where a mule in one corner of your sleeping apartment and a cow at the *table d'hôte* are by no means uncommon guests, I followed the ass very meekly, and turned off into an earthy room, where the famous chimney had its base in a spreading stone pent-house, overshadowing a monstrous hearth. The chimney looked bigger than the house. A great mass of wood, branches of trees, leaves, and old logs were sputtering and crackling on the hearth, and round about were ranged a number of little pipkins with sticks in them. These were apparently paint-pots full of burnt umber, but on closer inspection I found them to contain chocolate in various stages of frothing and simmering.

By this time I had bethought myself of two very valuable morsels of counsel given me by a friend in Madrid. First, to salute the company generally, whatever you are about to do—even if it be to rob them; next, not to ask for anything when you see it, but forthwith to help yourself. So I bowed to the company, who were of "all sorts," travellers and peasants, wished them all good morning, and appropriated one of the pipkins.

Then on a shelf I found a cup, and opening a drawer I found a spoon and some sugar. A gentleman who had gone outside to speak to a friend had left his bread behind him; a very handsome hunk it was. As Mr. Crack observes of the pint of beer in the *Turnpike Gate*, "another gentleman found it"—that is to say, I took the bread and ate it. When the gentleman came back it was amusing to see him look curiously about, as though his bread had had wings and flown away; but I made what amends I could with my mouth full, and offered him what remained of the hunk. I never stole a loaf before, but as I presented the proprietor in the velveteen small-clothes with a *peseta* for my entertainment, my offence was, I trust, at the most but venial. Not until you travel in Spain, my epicurean friend, will you learn how inestimable a boon is a lump of dry bread. I have not suffered the pangs of hunger without the means of satisfying them for sixteen years; but in Spain, with a pocketful of dollars, you may know what it is to lack food.

This Venta de Cardenas—the place where I "collared" the loaf—was beaten into my memory at once like an etching with aquafortis, and I am sure I shall never forget that huge hearth with half a shrubbery blazing upon it, and the semicircle of pipkins, with a Spanish old woman crouched on her haunches in the midst, gabbling incessantly, a veritable *molin a palabras*. Emerging from the door, this time unjostled by a

donkey, I found the proprietor chaffering with a tall, gaunt, wiry man in a complete suit of leather, from cap to leggings, who looked very much like Rip van Winkle, and even more like a modern New York rowdy who had come over to England, turned poacher, and then fled to Spain to avoid Sir Baldwin Leighton's game law. He had a bag by his side full of birds, and a mule stood at a little distance, its panniers gorged with game. These are the things that make you weep and wail that you were not brought up a painter—if any one can be "brought up" to that delightful art.

By-and-bye came thundering up a whole string of *diligencias*—the "Correo" itself, carrying the mails, the "Norte y Mediodia," the "Cordobesa," and my own "Victoria"—each with a team of powerful mules, their backs and shoulders shaven, and a postilion on the leaders. Dirtier, uglier, more ramshackle conveyances than these *diligencias* it would be difficult to conceive. In point of discomfort and unrepair they beat the St. Michel and Susa ones hollow; but of the "Victoria," at least, it is but fair to admit that she keeps up a tremendous pace. The stages are about two leagues in length, but from one end to the other the eight mules go full gallop. The windows are generally broken, the shutters wont draw up or come down, the stuffy cushions are shaken out of their places; insects lurk on the straw; the space allotted to you is ridiculously inadequate to the requirements of grown persons; you are blinded by the dust, deafened by the

din, your bones are dislocated, and any number of reefs are shaken out of your liver by the jolting; but still the pace is kept up, and you march—"devour the territory," as the French say.

The road winds round the loins of the mountain, and overhangs sometimes precipices which make you feel somewhat nervous. There is a tremendous gap called the *Salto del Frayle*—the Friar's Leap—which is perfectly awful to look upon. Before coming into Santa Clena, the first village in Andalusia, we passed an encampment of gipsies. There were the old blanket tents, the old pots, and pans, and kettles, and the blue curling smoke; the brown children sprawling about; the meditative donkey, looking unutterable things, but who, if he could speak, could disclose inconceivable villanies committed by his master, Mr. Petulengro; and there was Mr. Petulengro himself mending a saucepan, and shading his twinkling, roguish eyes with his brown hand to look at us as we passed, and watch if we dropped something which he could steal; there was his brown wife, making a manual inspection of the black locks of his brown daughter; there were the two crouching crones putting their wicked old heads together, and muttering inscrutable gibberish on the affairs of Egypt; and there, above all, was the gipsy dog—an arch rogue this—wagging his stump of a tail at the morning sun, looking like a dog who was up to all things, who could do tricks upon the cards, dance the *fota Aragonese*, whisper horses, mend saucepans,

tell fortunes, despoil farmyards, steal linen from hedges, and coin bad *pesetas*. We left these Romany chals or Romany ryes soon behind us; but I could see, from a long distance, a couple of *guardias civiles* leaning on their carbines and watching them very intently. Mr. Borrow will be sorry to learn this; but, in the opinion of most Spaniards, the *gitanos* are growing too picturesque, even for Spain. They rarely venture so near a railway as this; and a score more years of Spanish railways will, it is to be feared, clear them out altogether.

## CHAPTER XVIII.

FROM MADRID TO CORDOVA—THEORY ABOUT SAINTS—"LAS NAVAS DE TOLOSA"—"LA CAROLINA"—BAYLEN—"BLESSED HUMINA COSIN."

"MIRIAM cures wounds, and Pharaoh is sold for balsam," the old Knight of Norwich tells us; but what do you think of a supernatural personage whose aid is invoked *como abogado del mal de riñones*—a saint who cures complaints of the kidneys? His name was the blessed Esme, and he flourished at Burgos about seven hundred years ago. For all you may think to the contrary, I hold the saints in no disrespect. A few questionable characters may have crept into the calendar—St. Ignatius Loyola, St. Dunstan, St. George, the army contractor, for instance; a great many are purely mythical, and invented only by imaginative monks to fill up odd days in the hagiological year; and among the lazy saints it is probable that numbers of them were of a mere weak, watery, hysterical, half-cracked nature, like M. de Montalembert's St. Elizabeth of Hungary, who used to get up at three in the morning to be fustigated by her maid-servants, and who made her palace so uncomfortable to her husband by

entertaining beggars and lepers—all of whom, like the Boy Jones, insisted on sleeping in the best beds—that she drove the poor man to the Holy Wars. A reform of the calendar, in other than an astronomical sense, is much needed; only at this distance of time it is hard to tell who were the "bogus" saints and who the genuine ones. Still no reasonable man need doubt that, among the legion of people with hard names who have come down to us in a beatified state, there were great numbers of really pious, virtuous, and illustrious men and women, who were enabled to do an immensity of good in their time.

The real saint, indeed, was in all probability the progressive man of the dark ages—the man of thought as well as action. Clear away all the fictions believed by succeeding generations of ignorant and superstitious people, and the so-called miracles of the saints would, very probably, turn out to be, not conjuring tricks, but real works of public utility. The ancients deified Hercules for the performance of his labours; but, as likely as not, the stables of king Augeas were only a classical Smithfield Market infected by the cattle plague; the Lernæan hydra a defective bankruptcy law; and the mares of Diomed, which fed on human flesh, the pretty horse-breakers of the period. Thus those who, so soon as they had adopted a new and purer creed, proceeded to adulterate and debase it with the grossest absurdities of Paganism—those who have made the Toussaint out of a Feast of Pan, and turned Venus Verticordia

into the Virgin Mary—canonized as saints the people who strove to do good in their time and to reform existing nuisances. Sometimes they made a mistake, and massacred their benefactors; but let us hope that, as a rule, it was the reformers who were made saints. Gregory was the Dr. Arnold, Austin the Dr. Livingstone of his day. They were sanctified. St. Bridget, who is said to cure complaints of the heart, may have been a noted promoter of innocent merriment—the best cure for supposed complaints of the heart I know; if you have a *real* disease there, to laugh kills you. Santa Lucia may have been a benevolent lady who set up a blind school—hence she is always invoked by sufferers from ophthalmia; and Santa Barbara, the patroness of miners and artillerymen, an honest chandler's-shop-keeper in the mining district, who declined to do business on the infamous truck system, or a good-natured little *vivandière*, who gave credit to the bombardiers of C battery.

It may be that after ages, as incurably addicted to Mumbo-Jumboism as their predecessors, will adore as saints those whom at present we only respect and admire as good and worthy folks. The sick and the lame will pray to Santa Filomela, in remembrance of Florence Nightingale; the poor mechanic will doff his hat in honour of Saint Peabody; Miss Burdett Coutts will be immortalized as St. Angela of Highgate; the needle-woman and the milliner, no longer starved and overworked, will light a votive candle to Saint Tom

Hood and Saint Tom Hughes; little factory children will pray to Saint Ashley Cooper—although some theologians will maintain that his proper name was Saint Shaftesbury; there may be perhaps a Saint James Watt and a Saint George Stephenson; and those whose lot it is to labour, "when they recruit their exhausted energies with abundant and untaxed food, the sweeter because it is no longer leavened by a sense of injustice," may bless the name and bow the knee before some storied shrine displaying the effigy of Saint Robert of Tamworth.

There is nothing, thank goodness, the matter with my general health, but had I been in the last extremity of disease, I think my journey to Baylen in a *diligencia* would have cured me on the spot. There is a law in mechanics which teaches us that everything should be done to diminish friction, but it says nothing about jolting; and in therapeutics, to judge from the "when taken to be well shaken" dictum, oscillation and concussion would seem to be rather desiderata than otherwise. The ancient Germans used to cure lumbago by laying the patient on a table, and thrashing him with a flail; the old Bedlam mad doctors used to fasten the crazy one in a chair turning on a pivot, and spin him round till they shook his senses in, or what remained of his senses out; and I once made a cutting from an American newspaper setting forth how a schoolmistress down east had cured her scholars of a tendency to insubordination

by making them stand on their heads, and pouring cold water down their trouser legs. "A good shaking" is still the remedy suggested for many ailments to which the British female in a state of domesticity is subject. And what better cure is there for deficient circulation than horse exercise or the *valse à deux temps?* I should recommend a course of the "Victoria" between Andryar and Baylen. The terrible jolting you undergo in that conveyance churns up the remotest corners of what Bishop Burnet, speaking of the *post mortem* examination of Charles II.'s remains, irreverently terms his "majesty's inwards." I am much given to the study of anatomy; but I never could properly make out, when comparing the atlas of engravings with my own corporeal economy, where my heart, my lungs, and my liver were exactly situated. You find out on the road to Baylen. All those organs are in your mouth. Did not some learned academy offer a prize to any one who should discover the use of the spleen? I claim the prize; its use is to be shaken to bits at Las Navas de Tolosa.

At this wild, dusty place—the road thickly fringed with cactus and aloes, the scenery momentarily growing grander, and to the left looming tremendous the Sierra de Segura, where the Guadalquivir rises—was fought, early in the thirteenth century, a great battle between the Christians under Alfonso of Castile and Pedro of Aragon, and the Moorish king Mohammed el Nadr. The Moors had the worst of the fight.

According to the chroniclers, they left two hundred thousand dead soldiers on the field. Allowing for the exaggeration inherent in chroniclers, and the inspiring heat of *el sol criador* of Andalusia, and knocking off three-fourths from the list of slain, we have yet fifty thousand men left dead here. The Christian loss, too, must have been very considerable, unless, as usually happened, a saint from heaven on a white horse made his appearance at the most momentous stage of the conflict, and causing every Christian to slay eleven Moors—in burnouses of buckram—preserved him safe and sound. Still, with fifty thousand men killed, it must have been more than a Waterloo. No Hougoumont, no Belle Alliance, no Mountain of the Lion marks the spot. No guide pesters you to buy rusty scimitars or broken bridle bits of the sire, or dam, or foal of the famed Bavieca. I question whether the pickaxe they use here instead of a plough ever turns up a Moorish skull with a hole made by a Christian battle-axe in it. The great fight and its traces are clean wiped out.

Did you ever hear of Las Navas de Tolosa before? I frankly own I never did. Yet here scores of thousands of men met and hacked and hewed each other to pieces because half of them fancied they were Christians, and the other half knew they were Mahometans. What lakes of blood must have weltered in this dusty place—what gory patches on the white burnouses—what Arabic moans to Allah—what Gothic

groans to La Virgen and the saints! How they must have cried out for water, and there was no gourd near—how they must have shrieked for chirurgeons to bind up their wounds, and there was no Hakim to help them! The red Andalusian sun must have gone down on a scene of unutterable agony, and misery, and despair; yet he rose calm and fresh next morning—just as he rises and sets on Little John Street, Marylebone, lightening and shadowing no graver occurrences than are comprised in the facts that Smith, the dissolute milkman of number nought, has beaten his wife again, and that Brown, the embarrassed bootcloser, of number ninety, being backward with his rent, has got the brokers in.

This is a country of battles. As Flanders is the cockpit of Europe, this is the prize-ring of Spain. But in the Low Countries the quarrels of kings have been decided. Here the battles of religion have been fought. Carnage is God's daughter, Wordsworth says. Of a truth, the Crescent and the Cross are engraved in equally ensanguined lines on the scutcheon of Andalusia. Leaving Las Navas de Tolosa, we have passed through a place called La Carolina; which Charles III.—desirous of rescuing this fairest portion of his kingdom from the slough of drowsy ignorance and inactivity into which it had been cast by the expulsion of the infidel Moors—colonized with many hundreds of hardworking Germans. He tried a similar experiment at the Moorish town of Almuradid, whence the Moors had

been evicted bodily. La Carolina he created as the capital of his colony; and, for a wonder in this part of Spain, the streets are wide and regular, and at right angles to one another, with an octagonal *Plaza*, for all the world like some High Dutch *Residenz-Platz*. The excellent roads in this vicinity are also due to Charles's well-meant attempt.

It naturally failed miserably. The natives held the Germans in hatred, because they were *extranjeros*—because, although Catholics, they were not so much given to Mariolatry and the worship of Venus Verticordia as *nosotros* were—because they couldn't eat *migas* and *gazpacho*, or bread soaked in oil and fried, and because they had notions of agriculture. Those notions were not very scientific, but they were somewhat in advance of Andalusia, where, to this day, ploughing is done with a pickaxe, or with the forked branches of a tree; where the seed is trodden in with the foot and the sod scarified with a wooden fork; and where you may yet see your neighbour's landmark as in the Book of Deuteronomy, and the turret in the vineyards as in the parable of the wicked husbandmen. The hard-working Germans had, in Yankee phrase, to "clear out," or were cleared out, by the *navajas*, or knives, of the *poblaciones*, with the curses of the local clergy as a godspeed. There are few graver errors than to imagine that co-religionists, when of different races, will agree. Just ask a Scotch Presbyterian his opinion of an Irish one, and then ask them both what

they think of an American one. Even among the Romanist population of Canada you will find the Irish Papists with their own bishop and their own cathedral, and the French Papists with *their* bishop and *their* basilica; those who are brethren in the faith of St. Peter, nevertheless, are perpetually falling out and breaking one another's heads.

Baylen! The "Victoria" made it bravely, allowing only the "Correo" to have precedence, but leaving the "Cordobesa" and the "Nova y Mediodia" far behind. It was very curious to peep from the *lumbus* of the carriage when the clouds of dust would permit you, and, looking up or down some precipice, as the road ascended or descended, see the string of heavy *diligencias* winding round the mountain sides. There never was a better name given to a mountain road than that by which the Riviera di Ponente, from Nice to Genoa, is called—"La Cornice." This Spanish *sierra* path is likewise a "cornice" road—a mere mantel-shelf; and watching from afar off the coach and its heavy train turning a sharp corner, with nothing but the *garde-feu*, or low parapet on the chasm side, between it and destruction, you expect every moment to see it fall off—the threatened fate of the extra British soldier placed on the island of Malta—and picture these eight miles, going full gallop on a dark night!

I remember a carriage-drive even more hazardous I took once in America. It was at Niagara, late at night. I was in an open barouche driving along the

river bank to the Clifton House, when, suddenly, the moon was obscured, and a tremendous summer storm came on. The rain fell in torrents, the darkness was utter and intense, and the horses ran away. I had a lady with me. It was not pleasant. Between the thunder-claps, which for once drowned the roar of the Falls, there would come great sheets of blinding lightning. Then, for one moment, but for that moment only, you saw the entire panorama of Niagara—the Horseshoe, the American Falls, Biddle's Stairs, the Spray, Goat Island, the river, the hotels, the village, every line, every spot, every dot, marked distinct, legible, there, close upon you. In a moment it was gone, and the darkness was as that of black velvet. Those who in moments of cerebral excitement have fancied that they have seen the apparition of some dear dead friend or relative will understand the intense vividness—the touchable, clutchable reality of the lightning's revelation, and the completeness of its evanishment. There is no parapet on the banks of the Niagara river, but luckily the horses kept in-shore, and we got home safely.

In toilsome manner did we skirt the great sierra and come about noon to Baylen. This town, say the guide-books, is "very dull and uninteresting." I venture to differ from the guide-books. I only stayed at Baylen an hour, but I found it the reverse of dull, and exceedingly interesting. It was the first real, unadulterated, sleepy, do-nothing Spanish town I had set foot

in, and the Parador de las Diligencias here was the first genuine Spanish *fonda* in which I ever endeavoured to obtain an *almuerzo*, or *déjeûner à la fourchette*. Such a *fonda!* Up a huge flight of stone stairs, of course. Great bleak corridors, with here and there a bench, and a hooded Spanish old woman, or a mooner wrapped in a blanket dozing thereupon. I peeped into one or two of the bed-rooms. They were huge, capitally ventilated, but with scarcely a bit of furniture, save a wretched pallet of sacking, a rush-bottomed chair, and a chest with a water-bottle on it.

I think that in many respects the Spanish *fonda*—for my experience has been enlarged since I was at Baylen—is not quite so filthy as an Italian *albergo* of the third class; nay, I have known some German inns off the main roads which might have taken a prize for nastiness and discomfort; but the peculiar characteristic of the Spanish hostelry is its nakedness. It is the insubstantiation of "*nada*"—the home of nothing. There is nothing to eat, nothing to drink, nothing to wear, nothing to sit or lie upon—all comparatively speaking. "*Hay de todo,*" says the landlord in "Don Quixote," when inquiries are made as to what he can give the travellers for supper—"there is everything—everything, at least, of that you bring with you." That is the clue to the entire business. The Spanish *fonda* is but the oriental khan. It gives you walls and water, and nothing else. If you wish to be comfortable and to make good cheer, you must bring your own furniture,

your own carpets, your own coffee, your own *kebábs*, your own *pilaf*. Then, after drinking a bottle of your own wine and smoking one of your own cigars, you will admit *que hay de todo*—that anything can be got at the *fonda* which you have been shrewd enough to bring with you.

I make this statement in the face of the fact that there was a stage-coach *table-d'hôte* at the Parador of Baylen, and that I sat down thereto, and that I was charged a dollar for that which I did not eat and drink. I am certain as to the last item by the same token that the waiter—a sharp lad, who will go far and do notable things if he takes care—contrived, in exchange for the gold doubloon I gave him, to palm upon me a bad dollar piece. I should properly have suspected foul play when I saw him go to the trunk where he kept his clothes under the dining-room table, and whip out the pretended gold piece; and what a fool was I, you will exclaim, to change a doubloon at Baylen. Well, in France or Italy you often change a Napoleon at an inn, and very rarely indeed are you swindled. I don't blame the *muchacho* at Baylen; he planted the piece cleverly. Some other rogue had foisted the spurious *escudo* on him, and he thought he might just as well put it off on me, an *extranjero*. If a waiter in an English hotel deliberately gave you a bad half-sovereign, you would raise a tremendous hubbub, threaten to give him in charge, bully the landlord, and write to the newspapers. But consider the

circumstances here. It was Baylen to begin with; trade is dull; times are hard; travellers are few. Perhaps the *muchacho* couldn't read or write; perhaps he had never studied Paley's "Moral Philosophy;" at all events, he had the best of me, and I do not blame him.

It was impossible to eat the breakfast. That hospitable late Lord Mayor who so indignantly repudiated the notion of feeding his guests at the Mansion House on Mr. Harper Twelvetrees's jerked beef, at threepence a pound, would have fainted outright had they put him down before the beef at Baylen. My private theory is that they use up the old diligence mules to furnish forth the travellers' table at the diligence Parador. Leather, gutta-percha, and fiddlestrings, these, even if served up with a sauce of chopped garlic and rancid oil, are not palatable. It is wicked to give your brother a stone when he asks for bread, but it is a mockery of hospitality to give him bread with pebbles as big as peas in it. By the way, Andalusia is the paradise of green peas, which come to table as early as the middle of January. The scimitar pea and the marrowfat (*Mehrah-fhat*) are clearly of Moorish parentage; but we got no green peas at Baylen. There were only *garbanzos*, which some call chick, but which I call cow-peas, swimming in oil. This was Petrolia: Baylen was Oil City. I fled from the grease, and from the dreadful rankly odorous table wine which Barry Cornwall must have had in his eye or in his mouth when he sang of the "coal

black wine" which King Death gave to drink to his lieges.

I went out to moon in the corridors, one section of which was decorated with a portrait of Don Baldomero Espartero, and with a flaming lithograph representing the "blessed Humina Cosin," who, having been declared "venerable" by Pope Pius IX., was subsequently beatified in the year 1860. In her portrait Humina Cosin was represented as about fifteen years of age, and her occupation, to judge from the emblems at her feet, was that of tending sheep. Among an agricultural population, ignorant and superstitious to the last degree, but not stupid—the rather highly imaginative—instances of beatification among the female peasantry are of frequent occurrence. Raw girls pass whole days in solitude on the mountain's side, tending sheep or goats. Solitude fails to stupify, but, on the contrary, excites, and at last produces hallucination. Reason may be torpid, but imagination becomes frightfully active. A German under similar circumstances would fancy she saw fairies and kobbolds. Rumpelstiltsken would come and catch her stray lamb for her; the grey maiden would appear, and promise her a husband with many cows and pigs. But the Southern girl, brought up on the tales told by the priests and played as a puppet show at the village *fiestas*—her head full of the Virgin and the saints—sees other visions on the mountain side. Our Lady comes down radiant in gold and jewels to the half-distraught maid, and tells her that she is very

angry with the villagers because they do not fast in Lent, and have not bought the *cura* a new umbrella. This saint puts in an appearance with his head under his arm; that saintess with her body stuck all over with darts, like a pincushion. And from these hysterical dreams spring your blessed Humina Cosins, and your children of La Salette, elsewhere. "*El Sueño de la razon produce monstruos.*"

I had three-quarters of an hour yet before me, and took a walk about Baylen. It was charming. Everybody seemed to be either wholly or half asleep. The population of the town is set down as ten thousand; but I don't think that, in the course of my forty-five minutes' stroll, I met forty people. I am speaking, of course, of the streets. On the *Plaza* there was the ordinary assemblage—a few *guardias civiles* watching a few soldiers; two or three groups of well-cloaked mooners critically eyeing the marble monument erected to commemorate the victory which Castaños, in spite of himself, won over the French Marshal Dupont in 1808, as though it had been set up yesterday; a dozen *polizones*, or little blackguard boys, playing hide-and-seek in the temporarily unoccupied *diligencias;* and the usual complement of beggars.

## CHAPTER XIX.

FROM MADRID TO CORDOVA—THE BEGGARS OF BAYLEN—THE DEFEAT OF MARSHAL DUPONT — MENZIBAR — ORANGES—A JOVIAL CUBAN—THE GUADALQUIVER—CORDOVA AND ITS MOORISH CHARACTERISTICS.

WHENEVER you meet in England with some special social abomination—Mr. Quilp's wharf at Gallows Dock, Rotherhithe, for instance; Alderman Adipose's bone-boiling factory at Battersea; Mr. Harmon's lay-stall and dust-mound at Pentonville; or, say, Mr. Cesspool Typhus, that great owner of house-property's "Rents" in Seven Dials, or Bethnal Green—and indignantly ask why it is not forthwith abrogated, you are generally met with the plea that "vested interests" forbid any interference with the nuisance. I do not myself believe that vested interests are so inviolable as their owners would make them out to be; and I hold that pluck, strong will, and a good sharp Act of Parliament will abate the foulest nuisance that ever festered. Still, in common with, I daresay, many of my countrymen, I have often been sorely perplexed, baffled, and thrown off the scent, when hunting the vermin Corruption with the Reform Pack, by the

sudden invocation of the vested interests phantom. I have often wondered who or what this grubby ghost really can be—where vested interests live when they are at home—how they first became vested; and whether, when they have a holiday, they go out for a frolic with Consols, Deferred Annuities, East India Stock, and other investments.

But in Spain I have learnt many things; and among other discoveries, real or imaginary, on which I pride myself, is one to the effect that the most tangible incarnation extant of vested interests is afforded by the beggars of Baylen. There is a gloomy grandeur, a homogeneous solidarity and autonomy about these interesting mendicants which can only be equalled by our home Beggardoms, and Swindledoms, and Rottendoms, some of which—in cathedral towns especially—have endured for many centuries. Indeed the Baylen beggar is himself not unlike a cathedral. He is hoary—look at his head. He is venerable—look at his beard. He is time-worn and time-stained—regard his wrinkles and his complexion. In his apparel every kind of fashion is to be seen, as every kind of architectural style is visible in some cathedrals. There is a bit of the Early Lombard in his jerkin, crossed with a Rénaissance patch and many Perpendicular tatters. He is an ogival vagabond. He has flying buttresses, and corbels, and finials. The front of his breeches is Rayonnant; the rear Flamboyant; his vest is Plateresco, and his cloak clearly in the Churriguerasque style. He

is capitular, basilican; but, above all things, he is a vested interest.

Without the beggar the provincial towns of Spain would lose their most salient characteristic, and more than half their charm. The monasteries have been suppressed, and I have heard of many most picturesque *frayles* who have been forced by adverse events to wash themselves, dress themselves, and make some efforts towards earning an honest livelihood. It is a sad thing, perhaps, to be compelled to leave the snug, quiet cloisters for the noisy work-a-day world. So have I heard of necessitous cameleopards and tigers in reduced circumstances hanging about a civilized settlement, and importuning the local Wombwell for an engagement in a caravan. The bare-footed friar has been fain to put on shoes, nay, make them for a living; the Carmelite is to be found behind a shop-counter, weighing out chocolate; and the Dominican, whom Tordesilius might have carved, or Zurbaran painted, keeps a *venta* and sells *vino y licores*. With the monks at least half old Spain went by the board. If a thing can be said to have three halves, another moiety went with the Inquisition; but in the sparse remaining fragment of the romantic, picturesque land which Cervantes and Quevedo have immortalized, we only recognize now the mule, the guitar, the bull-fight, and the beggar. These, perchance, are also doomed. In process of time the entire peninsula may become

one Madrid—a country where it is very hot, and very dear, and where newspaper boys cry "*las Noticias*" and "*la Iberia*" until two in the morning. There will still be oranges down south, and the odour of garlic and tobacco will be rife in the land; but so are they also in Italy. Spain will otherwise be only "on the continent." At present in many respects it is ten times less European than Algeria; and Moorish Africa really "begins at the Pyrenees."

While we have the beggar, then, let us enjoy him. He certainly enjoys himself. The consequential air with which he drapes himself in his tatters—*le sublime du haillon*, as Theophile Gautier has remarked; the care he takes that the most repulsive portions of his individuality shall be marked and prominent—all show that he is a man on the best terms with himself. I am sure I don't know what Baylen would be without him. Destitute of beggars, that *plaza* would be an abode of desolation. If there were no beggars they might as well shut up the Parador de las Diligencias, and take the *diligencias* themselves off the road. Perhaps all the three wretched old anachronisms will vanish together. Meanwhile, I should advise all artists who love their profession to come to Baylen and study the beggar. I have not seen him anywhere else in such bloom. He is like Gothic architecture at its culminating point. After Henry VII.'s chapel it declined. The beggar is now *tout ce qu'il y a de plus decoré*. So multifarious

in rags, so infinitely chequered in dirt, so luxurious in sores, a touch more would spoil, and knock him to pieces.

I have an idea that the beggars of Baylen have each their separate and exclusively vested interest of mendicancy in a particular *diligencia*—that one section devotes itself to the "Victoria," while another applies to the "Cordobesa," and a third, to use a cadger's phrase, "works" the "Norte y Mediodia;" and that interference with one another's vested begging ground would be resented as the most ungentlemanlike procedure. The door of the Parador is, however, neutral ground, where all may cadge. I was led to infer thus much from the particular attention paid to me by one old gentleman, who looked as if he had stepped bodily out of a copperplate etched by the noble Jaques Callot; who fastened on me directly the "Victoria" halted; who followed me in and out of that vehicle, and attended me in my walk about Baylen; who bade me welcome and farewell; but who at the inn-door allowed the general tribe to hold out their hands, and even stood aloof, with a patronizing air, as though to say, "This *caballero* belongs *to me;* but you may amuse yourself with him for a season. *Hay carne para todas*"—there is meat on him for all. Yet this same vagrant drove off, with astounding thwacks of his crutch, the young cavalier with the scorbutic affection who strove to intercept me when I entered the *coupé* to get some cigars. I belonged to the old beggar, then. He was a most unitarian kind of man. He had one

eye, one arm, one leg, one crutch; and one nostril, I think, was gone.

Yes, there must be a mutual pact of vested *interests* between the beggars of Baylen, as there is between the vagrant dogs of Stamboul. Woe be to the strange she-dog who dares to nourish her pups on a muck heap not her own, or to the she-cur from the quarter Al-Jarab who presumes to snarl at a Feringhee within the limits of the quarter Al-Djurr. The dogs to the manner born will all pounce upon, worry, hurry, and pursue the intruder to the limits of her quarter; but that boundary they will not cross. There they will leave the invader in peace. You might fancy a police-constable on the Fleet Street side of Temple Bar declining to take cognizance of an assault case on the Westminster side of the barrier.

Baylen did not wake up when the *mayorals* of the various diligences summoned us to depart. The beggars only made a parting raid upon us, and it is but fair to admit that we left the place highly recommended on their part to a score of most influential saints. The beggars, indeed, and the sharp *muchacho*—he will be minister of the *Hacienda* yet, that *muchacho* who gave me the bad two-dollar piece—seemed the only people alive in Baylen. We left the town sweltering in its sun and its sloth. Happy the people, they say, whose chronicles are stupid, and who are seldom heard of. There are ten thousand souls here; and to every Bailano, his own life, honour, and general weal, are mat-

ters, no doubt, of the liveliest interest; but Baylen's ten thousand make no sign in the world's hurly-burly. Whether the ten thousand advance or retreat matters little.

Yet the somnolent place has seen, in its time, like Hohenlinden, "another sight." There, fifty-eight years ago, "the drum beat at dead of night." The next day, a furious July one, Marshal Dupont was utterly routed by the Spanish General Castaños, or at least by the French emigrant De Coupigny, the Swiss Reding, and the Irishman Jones, who commanded under him. Castaños himself did not arrive until after the battle was over, took no steps to improve his unexpected victory, and, indeed, seemed afterwards rather ashamed of it. He answered precisely to the English statesman who was said to have been kicked up-stairs. A very curious and a very sufficing reason is given for the signal defeat suffered by the French, who lost 3000 killed, 20,000 prisoners, and nearly 50 pieces of artillery here. The heat of the day was tremendous. The French had been hastily and stupidly marched across barren wastes and precipitous *sierras*. They were blinded with the sun's glare, and parched with thirst; whereas the peasant women of Baylen kept up a continuous cordon of barrels of cold water and porous *cantaros* to slake the thirst of their own countrymen.

A monument has been set up in the Plaza of Baylen in commemoration of this victory; but there is not much to rejoice over. It would be better for the inte-

rests of civilization, and for the country herself, were Spain at this moment a portion of the French Empire. Salamanca and Vittoria gleam very brightly in Napier's delightful history, and on the British war standards; but there is no getting over the uncomfortable fact, that in the Peninsular war, we—the freest and most civilized people on earth—were simply fighting the battle of tyranny and barbarism; that we gave back Spain to the despotic and despicable dolt Ferdinand, and that in 1836 we sent Sir de Lacy Evans and the British Legion to Spain to undo the work we had done between 1808 and 1814.

From Baylen the *diligencia* takes you for a couple of stages to Menzibar, which is said to be a railway station, but which resembles far more closely a large encampment of gipsies and other Bohemians, say on Epsom Downs the night before the Derby. The station is quite an incipient one; and I think it was on the head of a cask that the tickets were taken and the fare paid. There were, however, some rails lying about, and some loose stones, which did duty for a platform; and in process of time an engine came along, and stood snorting for a while like a horse which had got into a strange paddock. Then it seemed to occur to somebody in authority—and in his shirt-sleeves, smoking in a tent—that to have a few carriages hooked on to the engine would not be a bad idea; and in about an hour and a quarter after the time announced in the time-bill—which in Spain is a light-hearted and highly-coloured

composition, full of poetical licence and figurative language, like the programme of a bull-fight—we got under weigh, and started for Cordova, the guard of the train sarcastically telling a brawny athlete in full *majo* costume—pork-pie hat, ear-rings, pigtail, leather leggings, and flaming sash—who may have been the station-master, that Menzibar was not yet *el capital de la Provincia.*

I don't think it can be the capital of anything, save, perhaps, that part of the kingdom of Galilee in which the Cours des Miracles is situated. I shall, however, always preserve a lively and grateful remembrance of Menzibar, because in the *fonda* attached to the incipient station I was enabled to breakfast off nine of the largest and most fragrant oranges out of which it was ever my luck to squeeze the life. "Through the golden juice of an orange," says the Andalusian proverb, "you see heaven." Can anything under heaven surpass, can anything equal, this glorious globe? In shape the perfection of symmetry, in economy the perfection of convenience, in colour gorgeous, in perfume exquisite, in flavour incomparable. How many times before has this been said? I maintain that we don't say it half often enough; that we are not half grateful enough for oranges; and that we ought to say grace before sucking one. Did I come all the way to Andalusia to utter trite eulogiums on a fruit which is common enough at two a penny on every basket-woman's stall at every street corner in London? I believe that a journey of two thousand miles and over is often necessary to learn

a ha'porth of wisdom. I say that the plenitude and cheapness of oranges in England should be one of our national glories, that we shamefully disregard and well-nigh contemn oranges, because they are cheap, and too often associated with "ham-sandwiches, ginger beer, and bills of the play," the while we go grubbing, like hogs, for truffles, after all sorts of stupidities, because they are dear, scarce, and corrupt. At an orange from the stall, neatly polished on the sleeve of an old lady from the county Kerry, Trimalchio will turn up his nose; yet Trimalchio's mouth will water at the sight of a morsel of rotten Shapsegar cheese at Fortnum and Mason's, or a Bologna sausage made of defunct donkey; and he will go into ecstacies over perhaps the most revolting viand ever eaten by a nation not avowedly cannibals—the trail of a woodcock upon toast.

I fell into luck after I left Menzibar—I got something to eat. The reader will have perceived by this time that mine is a kind of gastronomical journal, or, the rather, a record of more or less fruitless attempts to obtain the necessaries of life; and that can scarcely fail to be the case in Spain, where you are always half starved, and where her Majesty Doña Isabel de Borbon herself, it is said, sometimes lacks vegetables to that *puchero* which all the year round makes its appearance after the soup at the royal dinner table. But are any excuses necessary for writing about eating and drinking, when one's illustrious predecessors are so fertile in examples of the same order? What a fine vein of beef

and mutton runs through the Iliad! How the Essays of Elia smell of the roast sucking-pig of China, the fried Smithfield sausages of Jem White, and the "gags" of Christ's Hospital! There is no gastronomy in "Paradise Lost"—a light desert *à l'Espagnole* excepted—and very little in the "Faëry Queene," and that is why we so seldom get to the end of those grand compositions.

Yes, I was in luck's way. The breakfast at Bayleh, as I told you, was uneatable. Many hours had elapsed since I stole the gentleman's bread at Venta de Cardenas; and the nine oranges at Menzibar, although wonderfully grateful and refreshing, did not quite fill up the vacuum so much abhorred by my mamma Nature. But I had scarcely seated myself in the railway carriage ere I made acquaintance with a jovial Cuban—one of the best types of the Habaners—an active, energetic, go-a-head sugar planter, who had been educated in the United States; spoke English fluently—even up to the swearing point of fluency; and had made two journeys to England—one to see the Great Exhibition of '51, the other to buy cane-crushing machines at Bolton and Glasgow. He was now on his way to Cadiz, there to take steamer back to the Havana. He did not seem at all impressed with the beauties of his mother country; and rather contemptuously intimated that he wouldn't give a dollar a head for his compatriots all round. He had a friend with him, a Cadiz man, not quite so go-ahead; but in addition he had a mighty wicker basket, such as prudent house-

wives carry with them to Tottenham-court Road on a Saturday night. From this pannier he produced a pie—a sumptuous pie of beef and pork—a huge packet of sandwiches, a sweet sausage, any number of hard eggs, and a quantity of pretty, tiny, kickshaws, such as chocolate and *dulces*, together with two bottles of the soundest dry sherry I ever had the honour to taste. The contents of this basket seemed so inexhaustible, that I began to fancy I was in the presence of some rival of Herr Wiljalba Frikell—say of the Great Wizard of the Queen of the Antilles.

We were, all together, five in the carriage; and the jovial Cuban, spreading his good things around him, like the genius of Plenty emptying a cornucopia, bade us all fall to. We did, like wolves. There were no forks, no tablecloth, and no spoon; but every man had his knife; and the gleaming of *navajas*, combined with the "cluck, cluck, cluck" of the dry sherry from the bottle neck was startling. Then the jovial Cuban brought out a large bag of oiled silk, in which he kept his cigars, to preserve them from the action of the sea-air, and, for that purpose, much preferable to sheet lead. He made a general distribution of *brevas*—genuine Havanas—among the company; and lo! the wheels of Time began to run on flowers, and the sands from his glass were diamond dust, which sparkled as they passed. Oh, jovial Cuban! to see what can be got out of a meat pie, a flask of Amontillado, and a few rolls of tobacco!

I have dined much in my time. I have hobnobbed with the Fishmongers and the Goldsmiths; nay, I have sat under the shadow of the mystic gridiron of the Beefsteak Club, whose very *locale* is unknown to the multitude; and have inhaled a pinch of snuff from the hoof of Napoleon's charger, "Marengo," at that awfully ineffable mess, upstairs, out of a stable-yard in a certain palace, near St. James's Street—the cream of the cream of messes, which requires a Parliamentary vote and many thousands a year to pay for it. But depend upon it the best banquet, after all, is the impromptu one, where the forks are fingers, and a sheet of paper the table-cloth, and you don't care about tumblers, and he is looked upon as a fellow of infinite resource who produces a little salt in an envelope from his waistcoat pocket.

Man is a picnicking animal; that is to say, man has a very strong vein of the old savage in him, and requires very little persuasion to induce him to lie in a hole under a rock, spring upon the first live thing which passes, drag the prey to his cavern, and devour it there raw. At all events, I never made so pleasant a picnic as this in the Andalusian carriage, save one, under rather analogous circumstances, in the *diligence* crossing Mount Cenis. We were four in the *intérieur:* a Frenchman who was a *farceur,* a little French dancer on her way to fulfil an engagement at Genoa, her ancient mamma, and myself. It was a black November night, and we all told each other—in the dark—stories

of robbers and ghosts, till we found ourselves exceedingly hungry. The little French dancer's mamma had a basket containing a cold fowl, some ham, and a lump of bread; the Frenchman had a box of preserved plums —admirable things in their way; and I was the fortunate possessor not only of a bottle of Bordeaux, but of something even more precious—of an entire wax candle. It is true we had no candlesticks; but I happened to have brought with me from Milan a statuette of Garibaldi in a small packing-case. Out with a jack-knife came the French *farceur*. Dexterously did he scoop out a hole in my packing-case, just over Garibaldi's skull, and gleefully did we stick the taper therein. Then we supped, and the *farceur* sang us, "*Le pied qui r'mue*," and the little French dancer tried to show us what steps should be danced to it—the which, in the somewhat confined area of the inside of a stage-coach was a somewhat difficult process. We were quite sorry to get to Susa.

And I was nearly as sorry to reach Cordova. Not often in travelling, not often in life, do you meet the right man—the man with the basket. More rarely still do you meet with the right lady, and then the chances are that you are forced to part almost as soon as you have met. There was no help for it, however. The sun was setting when, coming to a ticklish part of the railway—a stiff bit of clay indeed, which it was feared might slip in consequence of the late heavy rains —the guard politely invited us to descend, and walk for a

couple of hundred yards; while the train, relieved from our weight, went gingerly over the questionable ground. It was a charming walk; for the landscape, bathed in all the hues of the setting sun, looked a very paradise. Below the railway level, seventy feet perhaps, was a shining river, densely blue—a mere strip of the sky turned upside down. I was dull enough to ask its name. I should have known it by this time. It was the Guadalquivir. "On the banks of the Guadalquivir, by that bright and flowing river." Yes; I think it must be nearly twenty years since I went to Drury Lane Theatre to hear a pretty opera by Mr. Lavenu, in which a ballad to those words was sung. I remember Mr. Telbin's picture of the "bright and flowing river;" but, good lack, I never dreamed then that my first acquaintance with the Guadalquivir would be made under compulsion and the apprehension of a land-slip.

The night came, and I to Cordova. A very civil person, with a Gascon accent, addressed me as I left the train, and advised me to proceed to—say the Fonda Abdallah, telling me that it enjoyed the inestimable advantage of a French guide and interpreter. "The one at the Fonda Suiza," he continued, "is a fool, who only speaks English." I informed him that I had made up my mind to go to the Fonda Suiza, and that I spoke English myself; whereupon, very philosophically he replied, that ere I had been twelve hours in Cordova I should find out what a fool the English guide was, and run about, *désespéré*, in search of him,

the French one; in anticipation of which he had the honour to hand me one of his cards. I duly proceeded to the Fonda Suiza, and, causing myself to be introduced to the English guide—who was a "rock scorpion," from Gibraltar, speaking the most extraordinary "pigeon English," picked up from steamboat stokers and soldiers' wives—made an appointment with him to visit the Great Mosque on the succeeding day. He was overjoyed at the appearance of a customer, and congratulated himself and me that I had not fallen into the hands of that "dam blackguard" of the Fonda Abdallah. There is a good deal of Freemasonry in hatred. While A is abusing B, you might discover, were you ubiquitous, that B was calling A all the names he could lay his tongue to.

Cordova! Was the town through whose streets I had been carried in the railway omnibus really in the Spanish province of Andalusia? I began to doubt the fact greatly. Crossing the esplanade—which, under the name of Alameda, Paseo, Prado, or Rambia, is usually to be found in the outskirts of all Spanish towns—the omnibus plunged into a maze of narrow tortuous lanes, of which I had never seen the like since I wandered this summer in the Moorish quarters of the towns in Algeria. It surely must be Africa. Whitewashed houses built on the lean-to principle until the opposite attics—which were generally the first-floor as well—nearly touched one another. Tiny windows, mere loopholes, above; those below guarded by iron gratings

in the most beautifully fantastic geometrical patterns—mathematics run mad, so it seemed; although Mr. Owen Jones will tell you that the surprising results in these wonderful patterns are produced, as in the Alcazar and the Alhambra, by the very simplest means —the mere division of the plane of delineation into squares, horizontal or diagonal, and the "setting off" each alternate square. Flat roofs, square towers, now and then an open doorway, revealing a court inside surrounded by horse-shoe arches supported on delicate pillars. Porches lined with enamelled tiles, and garden walls above which you could see palms, and great clusters of oranges, citrons, and vines. It was slight, but fragments of this strange vision were revealed, now by the moon, now by the street lamps. I was almost sorry to see lamps; they broke the charm. It was a consolation—from a picturesque point of view, not from a civilized one—to know that gas has not yet penetrated to Cordova, and that the streets are only lit by petroleum.

Narrow lanes! These winding passages rather resemble the quiet footways in some English Inns of Court, for every now and then you come to a tiny *plaza*, a mere Pump Court, and there is generally a fountain in it,—and then you plunge again into more winding alleys. No public buildings meet the view, save churches; there are a hundred and forty, they say, including the nunneries, in Cordova; but even these, plastered as they are outside with virgins and saints,

look uncommonly like mosques. I expected every moment to see the row of slippers laid on the steps of the sacred edifices; to light upon the stately Moor stalking by in his burnous, or the white phantom of the Moorish woman gliding along—her big black eyes piercing through the shades of evening, and looking unutterable things at you.

But I was in no city of the Moriscos. This was, indeed, Cordova, in Andalusia, capital of the province of the same name, the seat of a bishopric and a *commandancia general*, with a battalion of infantry for a garrison, and a *carcel*, or prison, full of smashers and forgers of thousand real notes, and a population of forty-five thousand souls. I went to the Fonda Suiza, and communed with the "rock scorpion" from "Gib." I supped at the *misa rotonda*, and sat among French *commis voyageurs*, German bagmen, English railway engineers and traffic managers; and then I went out again into the night, and was again bewildered among the Moorish lanes, and the horse-shoe arches, and the oranges and the palms, and the great carved gateways, many with Arabic inscriptions over them, reciting, no doubt, that there is no conqueror but Allah, and that Abraham has defied Satan, the "pelted with stones." But there were no Moorish coffee-houses, with their twanging mandolins and monotonous chants, of which the "root," as the Arabs call it, is always the beauty and cruelty of women, and the chorus, to my ears, at least, "*Amalaya —amalaya—amalayou!*" There were no white phan-

toms in *haicks* and *serouals;* but two magging girls in mantillas were dawdling along with a basket of linen between them; and, at a *plaza* corner, a Spanish old woman, skinny and grey, started up, like the Witch of Endor, and begged for a *limosna* in the name of Santa Marina de Aguas Santas. I found a coffee-house at last, but it was decidedly an European café, and the French and German bagmen had adjourned there to play cards. The jangling of the church bells warned me that the muezzins' voices from the minarets were hushed. And then, all at once, the moon hid her face and burst into a flood of tears; that is to say, a pelting shower of rain descended. Ten minutes ago it was an almost summer evening, now there is a torrent, and the cold was piercing. I fled back to the Fonda Suiza, still thinking Cordova the most Moorish town I had ever seen out of Barbary, and wondering much what had become of the Moors.

## CHAPTER XX.

ANDALUSIA THE EDEN OF SPAIN — ITS MOORISH CONQUERORS—MODERN MOORS—THE DECAY OF CORDOVA.

I AM in Andalusia. This is no blue and brown desert like the Castiles, through which I came from France to Madrid. Here is no wilderness of stones and jagged boulders, strewn as it were by Titans in some antediluvian game of knuckle-down, when the alley-taws were lumps of rock as big as that with which Polyphemus slew Acis. Here are no sterile tracts where famishing goats nibble a scanty meal of rank herbage from between the abounding pebbles, but a soft and undulating country, bathed in bright hues and teeming with fertility. Densely wooded are the hills, rich in every kind of vegetation the valleys between, green as the south of Ireland in spring the velvet plains. Here grows the vine, as thickly as in the Rhineland; here the *cornicabra*, the *aceituno*, the all-bounteous olive, dot the fields. Here mountainous artichokes and colossal melons swarm, a pride to the provident, a reproach to Madrid, that purgatory of market gardeners. And here, above all, grows the orange. The meanest *patio* is a garden of the Hes-

perides—the much-vaunted Hercules may have been, after all, but a shrewd speculator in oranges, and his "Pillars" only the columns of some antique Covent-garden Market, between which he set up his stall. Here the oranges grow tame, and the oranges grow wild. They will go on bearing fruit for twenty years; at this instant they are flowering—a heavenly sight to see—for, as Mr. Spectator observed long ago, "it is rare to find a plant vigorous enough to have, like the orange-tree, at once beautiful shining leaves, fragrant flowers, and delicious nourishing fruit." To behold an orange-tree in full bloom, with its triple panoply of leaves, flowers, and fruit, is only equalled by that sight which—I will be a professor of Podsnappery for once—is not to be seen out of England, that of a still young and beautiful woman with a little baby in her arms and a grown-up daughter by her side. And, for the life of you, you can't tell which of the three looks prettiest and comeliest.

Not till we reach the south-eastern coast by Malaga and Valencia do we come to the tropical region—the *tierra caliente* of Spain, where rice, sugar, cotton, maize, coffee, and silk will all flourish; but surely in this land of grapes and olives and oranges—lemons and limes, almonds and raisins, I disdain to dwell upon—one should be satisfied with what nature has done for us. The climate of Andalusia is, during nine months of the year, boiling hot; but this, the end of February, is delightfully cool and temperate. In the daytime the sun

has power—power enough to make you cast off your greatcoat and long for a Panama hat: but the nights are sharp, and you are fain to cry out for a *brasero* in your inn lodging. You must either have the *brasero* or blow upon your fingers to keep them warm, for fire-places are not to be found in Andalusia. Stop! the dwarf palm grows here. Not the graceful feathery palm, but the spiky furibond-looking one—the palm which seems to be in a passion. Yesterday, too, I saw whole groves of aloes and cactus. To-morrow I live in hopes of gazing on the dissolute trunk and ensanguined leaves of that most bacchanalian-looking tree the banana. I never look upon a banana, with its giant foliage all crimson and purple bruises, and its rakish, devil-may-care aspect, without likening it to some roysterer who has been out all night, beating the watch, or being beaten by that municipal force.

This is Andalusia, the Eden of Spain—the earthly Paradise of the old Moors—the enchanted land for so long a time the heritage of the Moslem:—

> La terra molle e lieta
> Simile a se l' abbitator produce.

"The Moors," writes Mr. Washington Irving, than whom no truer lover of Spain ever lived, "deserved this beautiful country; they won it bravely, they enjoyed it generously and kindly. No lover ever delighted more to cherish and adore a mistress, to heighten and illustrate her charms, and to vindicate and defend her against all the world, than did the Moors

to embellish, and enrich, elevate, and defend their beloved Spain. Everywhere I meet traces of their sagacity, courage, urbanity, high poetical feeling, and elegant taste. The noblest institutions in this part of Spain, the best inventions for agreeable and comfortable living, and all those habitudes and customs which throw a peculiar and oriental charm over the Andalusian mode of living, may be traced to the Moors. Whenever I enter those beautiful marble *patois*, set out with shrubs and flowers, refreshed by fountains, sheltered with awnings from the sun, where the air is cool at noonday, the ear delighted in sultry summer by the sound of falling waters, where, in a word, a little Paradise is shut up within the walls of home, I think on the poor Moors, the inventors of all these delights." Washington Irving goes on to tell us that a worthy friend and countryman of his, whom he met in Malaga, swore that the Moors were the only people who ever deserved to possess Spain, and prayed to Heaven that they might come over from Africa and conquer it again. But in this the worthy friend and countryman of the delightful author of the "Tales of the Alhambra" was out in his reckoning. The Moors who made Andalusia a heaven upon earth, and whose wonderful works in architecture, in sculpture and painting, in husbandry and floriculture, and hydraulics, are as ineffaceable as those of the Romans, had nothing in common with the barbarous and brutish Moors of Morocco.

It has been pointed out, as an instance of the de-

generacy of the modern Moors, that, when a few years since Muley Abbas, brother to the present emperor, was permitted to visit Cordova, and after he had made the sevenfold circuit on his knees round the sanctuary in the mosque-cathedral, he beat his breast and sobbed and moaned, because he was unable to understand the meaning of the Arabic inscriptions sculptured on the walls of the *kaaba* by his ancestors. They were no more ancestors of his—the dingy savage—than Socrates and Miltiades were ancestors of the Klephtic rogues who inhabit the modern Athens. The Moors who originally civilized Spain were not from Africa, but from Asia. They were the learned, polished, and chivalrous Arabs of Damascus and Bagdad; Mosaic Arabs, indeed, who had abandoned Judaism for Islam. The Arabic they spoke and wrote differed as widely from the uncouth lingo current on the African seaboard as Attic Greek does from the Romaic of the Turkish provinces. The old Arabic, indeed, inscribed on the walls of the Allagars and Alhambras of Spain, is more like Persian than the idiom spoken in Egypt, Algiers, and Morocco. I had a signet ring engraved once in Algiers, with my name in Arabic characters; but the first really classical Arabic scholar to whom I showed it was unable to decipher it.

Thus there is very little reason to join in a prayer for the African Moors to come over and conquer Spain again. They have about as much to do with the Moors of Granada and Seville, as the Cornish wreckers have to do with the Phœnicians. Morocco is inhabited by all

kinds of blackguards akin to the Berbers and Kabyles of Algeria; only, in the cities of the last-named country are to be found among what are called the "sedentary Moors," and especially among the Jews—an eminently handsome, lustrous-eyed, clear-olive, almost fair-skinned, noble and courteous race,—the descendants of the real Arabs and the real Israelites who once inhabited the Peninsula, but who were cruelly and stupidly expelled by the successors of Ferdinand and Isabella. And in a question of race, it is impossible to dissociate the Arab and the Jew. The Arab is simply a Jew who believes in Mahomet, just as the Jew is an Arab who believes in Moses; that is why they hate each other so, and yet have always managed to live together without any fear of the dominant extirpating the persecuted race. The Christian is a Goth, a Northman, a Scandinavian, the hard-boned, fair-haired, blue-eyed child of the mountains. His skin will grow brown, and his eyes black after long residence in the country he has over-run; but he remains a Goth in heart, and between him and the Moslem there is war to the knife. Moorish and Jewish blood will fuse so easily that it is hard to tell the offspring of the Arab from that of the Israelite; but the blood of the Goth and the Mosaic-Arab will never mix; to the tenth generation the older type will assert itself.

These matters of race scarcely ever fail to be present to the mind in Spain, where the ethnological stripes, so to speak, are as distinct as the bands in a tartan plaid, and where a very slight education of the eye will

enable you to tell the Basque or ancient Iberian from the Castilian and Aragonese, who is the Goth, with a dash of the Roman in him. When you come south you find the Gothic type embrowned and mellowed by the sun, but, black eyes and tawny skin notwithstanding, still Gothic to the backbone. Among a crowd of swarthy peasants, a mysterious perception will, in a moment, enable you to pick out—as easily as a New Orleans planter will detect an octoroon among his white surroundings—the man who has any Morisco blood. Some thousands of the Moors, you will remember, at the time of the expulsion preferred forswearing their faith to leaving their adopted country. It was but jumping out of the frying-pan into the fire. Sooner or later the Inquisition got hold of them. Those who escaped the faggot became, in process of time, rather hidden among than absorbed by the surrounding Gothic populations; and after three centuries the Moorish type is still clearly discernible. It is another kind of swarthiness, another kind of eye-brightness, another cast of feature, another mould of form than those of the Christian Spaniard.

And now let us see how the Christian Spaniard has used this earthly paradise of the Paynim—how far he has developed the resources of the provinces which, in the time of the Moorish domination, must have possessed between three and four millions of inhabitants —Cordova alone had a million souls. Remember the degeneracy of Spain is no thing of the dark ages. There were Moorish kings reigning in Granada when

Henry VII. was on the throne of England. Chaucer or Gower might have studied in the University of Cordova; Ambrose Paré might have learned chirurgery from some learned Hakim of Granada. The Christian Spaniards have held undisputed sway in Andalusia for three centuries and a half. Let us see what use they have made of their three hundred and fifty years.

We will take, for instance, this paltry, sleepy, Andalusian town of Cordóva, with its forty thousand inhabitants—this town without trade, without commerce, without manufactures, without amusements, without life, without movement, but which was once the centre of European civilization, the successful rival of Bagdad and Damascus. Byzantium herself envied her. She was wealthy, and splendid, and renowned, when London was a poor cluster of houses, beginning at Ludgate and ending at Aldgate, and when the whole of Paris was comprised in the Ile St. Louis. This fourth-rate provincial city—stupid, mute, depopulated, ill-provided—contained, not five hundred years ago, a million of inhabitants. They were Moors and Mussulmen. The Goths came, under the pretence of Christianity, and drove the polished, learned, courtly Moslems out, and Cordova became gradually what it is now; a hundred and forty-four churches, a prison full of forgers, one decent inn—only they have not finished building it yet—some ruins, Roman as well as Arab, and the most magnificent mosque in the world, now converted into a Romanist cathedral.

At the time of the Moors the surrounding country was laid out in pleasure-gardens, richly wooded; but the Spanish peasant has a strange antipathy to trees. He would root up his olive plantations and his orange groves did not their produce bring in so many thousands of hard dollars annually; and the hills about Cordova are now for the most part bare of timber. Man's innate love of destruction is painful enough when visible in the dilapidation of a town, but when he comes to ruining the country, his wanton Vandalism becomes revolting.

There seems no reason whatever to doubt the statistics given of the former population of Cordova. It was famous even as a Roman city. Twenty-eight thousand of its inhabitants were massacred by Cæsar after his victory at Munda, as a punishment for having sided with Pompey. In the tenth century, under the Moors, it contained six hundred mosques, fifty hospitals, eight hundred schools—I doubt if there are eight in the actual Cordova—nine hundred baths, six hundred inns, a library of six hundred thousand volumes, and enjoyed a revenue of six millions sterling. The city was captured by St. Ferdinand in 1235. It began immediately to decline, and in Philip the Second's time its population had dwindled down to seventy thousand, and it has gone on in a *diminuendo* ever since. Schools, libraries, baths, inns, palaces, princes, doctors, students, have all disappeared; nothing remains to recall the glories of the Moorish Cordoba save the incomparable mosque.

## CHAPTER XXI.

THE MOSQUE OF CORDOVA — ITS FOREST OF COLUMNS — THE SANCTUARY—THE CHOIR—JESUIT ARCHITECTS—THE TESSELLATED CUPOLA OF THE SANCTUARY.

YOU may whitewash the Basilica at Cordova six inches thick, as the Spaniards, one generation of *badigeonneurs* after another, have been doing for centuries; you may choke its fountains, and fill up the glorious arches of its outer arcades with grim, Herrera, Newgate-like masonry; you may plaster scutcheons bearing the cognizances of Castile and Aragon and the ciphers of their Catholic Kings over delicate arabesque tracery and choice inscriptions from the Koran; you may hack niches out of precious slabs of mosaic, in order to bestow idolatrous images of Virgins, and saints, and martyrs therein; you may cram a Corinthian choir into the midst of an Oriental fabric—fancy the combination of the styles of the Alhambra and the church of St. Martin-in-the-Fields!—you may crown a stately Moslem minaret with an ugly Churrigurresque belfry; you may lay down a sham Italian pavement, with the most magnificent examples of Moorish *azulejos*, or tile-work, all around; you may plant your fane

thick with chapels and confessional boxes, and rear a *retablo* thirty feet high; you may lavish all your treasures of gems and goldsmith's ware to furnish forth your *sacristia*, and your *relicario*, and your *custodia*; you may say, in fine, "this Basilica is a Catholic cathedral. Here is the *altar mayor*; here the *Sagrario de manifiesto*; here the *respaldos*; here the *media naranja*. This church was purified by order of Ferdinand, the royal saint. By him it was dedicated to Santa Maria. That transept was built by order of Charles V., though it is but fair to admit that he afterwards expressed sorrow at having built it. This has been a Christian church for six hundred and thirty years."

You may say and do all this, and more; the Spaniards have been saying and doing it ever since the thirteenth century, when St. Ferdinand, adroitly taking advantage of the discord reigning among the Moorish factions, pounced on Cordova, and was strong enough to hold it for good and all. But not all the whitewashing in the world—not all the purifications, and incense-burning, and *curas* and *monaguillos*—will ever take away from this unique and astonishing edifice its original type and character. Faster than the scent of the roses clings to the broken vase, closer than the limpet adheres to the rock, and as indelibly as cliffs which have been rent asunder retain, for all the sea that flows between, the marks of their ancient union, does this place keep, in its every nook and cranny, the aspect of a Mahometan temple — of a Caaba, of a

Mosque; and the Mosque of Cordova it will remain until Time's great earthquake swallow it up, and its thousand columns are cast down and shattered for ever.

A French surgeon who for many years had served in Cayenne, told me that the only time in his life he ever remembered feeling real terror was when, botanising among the virgin woods of Guiana, he found, when the sun was declining, that he had strayed far from his negro guide, and that he had lost his pocket compass. All around him, in scores of interminable vistas, were trees—not as, in a hazy notion of tropical scenery, we often imagine them, their trunks clothed with creepers and a rankly luxuriant vegetation springing up at their feet; but fresh, green trees, with smooth, straight trunks fifty feet high perhaps, and more, and overhead a green chequered canopy: every tree like unto its brother; every vista of equal width, and without end. The surgeon was the central point, and from him there radiated innumerable alleys. If he changed his position there was a fresh centre, and a fresh radiation to infinity. Barely, by his shadow, so baffling was the chequer pattern cast through the green domes above, could he tell where the sun was, and in what direction lay the settlement; but to his horror he remembered that the sun must soon set, and that sunset in the tropics is followed by no twilight, but is at once succeeded by dense irremediable night. The moon or stars through those leafy cupolas would not avail him

the value of a lucifer match. He was despairing, when he heard the well-known signal cry of his negro guide. It was answered, at first to his horror, by a yell of monkeys and wild cats; but the signal was repeated again and again, and he gave the cry in countersign over and over again, till his lungs were sore; then the signal grew nearer and nearer, and his guide found him. He returned to the settlement; and, rescued from the primeval forest, so odd are the ups and downs of fortune, our surgeon slept that night in the comfortable state-rooms of a Government steamer which was taking soundings in one of the Guianian rivers.

Substitute a feeling of delighted bewilderment for the Frenchman's agonized dismay, and the primeval forest is the Mosque of Cordova. There is no other simile, no other comparison possible. It is a forest, but the trees are columns, the branches are double arches of parti-coloured brick, the canopy above is an *artesonado* ceiling of alcere wood. As far as the eye can reach, on every side, radiating from you, run the great avenues of marble shafts. They seem to have sprouted—they seem, at the least, to have been thrust into the soil pell-mell, without purpose or design, or to be the result of some happy accident of symmetry, as in the Styrian grotto. The Giant's Causeway, the Falls of Regla and Staffa, astonish you when you find nature putting on so much of the aspect of art. You can scarcely realize the fact that only the Eternal Architect has here plied the mallet and the chisel, the

level and the square. But at Cordova, your surprise is of a directly contrary order; you wonder to find art so very much like nature. You are amidst miracles of labour and ingenuity in construction, in design, and in decoration; yet it is difficult to conceive that any human being has ever done builder's or marble-mason's work here. The *main d'œuvre* has left no trace. Nobody has put *fecit* to the Mosque of Cordova. It is there, complete, perfect, a realized ideal—an opium-eater's vision instantaneously translated into marble and precious stones. And yet how wondrous the opium-eater's potency, when he is likewise a true poet! There was this Samuel Taylor Coleridge, ex-Bluecoat boy, ex-lecturer, light dragoon, newspaper writer, and what not—and who is remembered by many as a snuffy old man at Highgate—a sage in hair powder and black knee breeches, deafening you with endless "subjective" and "objective" babble. Mr. Carlyle knew and was bored by him. Well, this man falls asleep, or into a trance of opium, or mere "mooning," and behold! he dreams of the Mosque of Cordova. Those endless vistas of pillars are but Coleridge's "caverns measureless to man." He has never been in Spain; never, save among the Germans, out of his own country; the *antiquedades Arabes* of Loyano, the *Erinnerungen* of Wilhelm von Gail are probably sealed books to him; yet when his magnificent fragment is divested of its "Abyssinian maid" confusion of imagery, you might swear that Samuel Taylor Coleridge had lost his senses in the

pillar forest of the Mosque of Cordova, and come straight home to write the poem of "Kubla Khan."

Literally, like the King of Xanadu's pleasure dome, this mosque was "decreed" by Abderrahman. "Let it be," said the Caliph. "Let it excel Damascus; let it laugh Bagdad to scorn; let it be comparable only to the Acksah of Jerusalem; let a pilgrimage to its Mihrab be considered equal to one to the tomb of the Prophet at Mecca." Abderrahman himself designed the mosque, gave up for its erection a large portion of his revenues, and, it is said, laboured himself with hod and trowel at the works for a stated number of hours every day. There had been a Gothic Christian church on its site previously, and before that a Roman temple of Janus; and who shall say what other Phœnician or Carthaginian temples? but Abderrahman was a munificent Caliph, and when he turned his Christian subjects out of their cathedral he gave them as compensation the sum of one hundred thousand *dinars*, the present value of which would be nearly half a million sterling. The Metropolitan Board of Works might well profit by the example of the Caliph Abderrahman.

There should be, in the mosque, a thousand pillars; but, alas! the actual reckoning falls short of that number by about a hundred and fifty. There were even in Cordova's palmy days, the chroniclers affirm, as many as twelve hundred columns; but scores were ruthlessly battered down by the Spaniards, and others have become imbedded in the walls or absorbed in works of

repair. The pillars themselves have a history, and that of the most curious nature. Many of them are, not hundreds, but thousands of years old. They are monoliths, and came ready-shaped, capitals and all, from a dozen different countries: from Roman temples in Spain itself; from Seville, the ruins of Halica, and Tarragona; from Nismes, and Narbonne, and Arles, in France; from Carthage, and especially from Constantinople, whence the Greek Emperor Leo sent no less than a hundred and forty, as a present to his Musselman cousin. And when it is remembered what a tremendous curiosity shop had been made of Byzantium by Constantine the Great, there is no reason to doubt that among the seven score columns sent to Cordova there were some from Rome, and some from Greece, and some from Asia. The shafts that rear up Moorish arches may of old time have supported the stately pediments of temples where Ephesian Dian and the Sun-god were worshipped. The capitals are nearly all Composite and Corinthian, many of the purest classical proportions and the most delicate sculpture of acanthus foliage; while in a few you see that the Moor has been fain to imitate the Pagan's work, and strange geometrical puzzles creep like spiders' webs over the scrolled and florid sketches of the draughtsmen of Greece. The pillars are all of marble, and of different hues and kinds—of jaspar, green, and blood-coloured; of black, white, grey, and yellow, red, and cream-coloured marble; of emerald, of porphyry, of chalce-

dony, and, it is said, though one can scarcely credit it, of lapis lazuli. I saw, however, more than one deep-blue shaft veined with gold. It could scarcely have been an imitation, for there was a dent an inch and a half deep in one.

The astounding and almost supernatural variety of perspective is rendered clear enough to you when you come to study a ground plan of the Mosque of Cordova. An English resident in the town was good enough to lend me Bourgoing's excellent "Tour in Spain," published early in the present century; and therein are some most luminous plans and elevations of the great mosque. The secret of the forest of pillars is very speedily revealed; and it is so very simple a mystery—such a *secret de Polichinelle,* that you can scarcely help laughing, until you remember with admiration the combinative tact of these wonderful Arabs, whose "magic," with which their Gothic foes so often taunted them, was but a dexterous application at all times and seasons of the propositions of Euclid. By repetition and alternation, and ultimate superposition of the plainest geometrical figures, the Arabs were enabled to produce those "magic" looking decorations which put point lace and mediæval illumination to shame; and the "magic" they found so serviceable on their walls they applied, in even simpler form, to the ground plans of their palaces and temples. The pillars and arches of the Mosque of Cordova are ranged in nineteen parallel avenues or naves from east to west, and in

twenty-nine equal naves from north to south. These have but to intersect each other at right angles; the double-headed arches above equally intersecting in curves; and the "magic" effect is produced. The genius of mathematics has changed a primeval forest into a mosque of a thousand columns.

I have read a great many glowing descriptions of the aspect which the building must have presented a thousand years ago. It was completed about the year 800. The Mihrab, or sanctuary, alone was lit by a lamp containing fifteen hundred candles. The Caliph's taper, kindled by his own hands, weighed sixty pounds. The remainder of the mosque was illuminated by four lamps similar to the Mihrab one, and two hundred and eighty brazen candelabra. The total number of lights was ten thousand eight hundred and five, and seven hundred and fifty *arrobas* of oil were used every month. These and many more statistics more startling may be found in the historian Al-Makkari, and the legion of chroniclers who have borrowed from him; but their iteration at the present day will serve no purpose. Scant benefit will future ages derive from the elaborate tabular statements of our own chroniclers, setting forth how many bolts and plates, how many rivets and bulkheads, there were in the ship *Great Eastern;* or how many thousand plum-buns, pork-pies, and bottles of ginger-beer were consumed at the Crystal Palace on the occasion of some Foresters' fête. Enough, if we read the "Arabian Nights" and picture to ourselves that

on solemn festivals—say on the last night of Rhamadan —the sight in this mosque must have been more sumptuous than any fabled forth in the stories of Aladdin or Sindbad. The roof was many feet higher in the Moorish time, and glistened with gold and vivid colours; the walls were worked like lace; many were perforated in intricate patterns, and were illuminated from behind; and the double arches were so many rainbows, studded with emeralds and rubies and sapphires—at least with *azulejo* tiles.

Apart from the undying beauty and splendour of outline and perspective, and their concomitant triumphs of light and shade, there is little of all this left now besides whitewash. I knew a scene-painter once who had been a house decorator, and, having to depict a sky studded with stars, he very carefully ruled in a dark shadow to every individual planet on the ethereal blue. The Spaniards have committed a grosser solecism. They have whitewashed the rainbow arches, which but for the cunning curves of their outline would look as mean as the trusses and girders in a modern railway station. It cannot, I am afraid, be concealed that for the Past, which we reverence and delight in, the Spaniard has an aversion which is mingled with contempt. He cannot understand the enthusiasm shown by the stranger for the monuments of bygone ages, with which Spain is so fertile. The Moorish past is to him specially distasteful. It is no fault of the natives if every vestige of the Mahometan colonization of Spain

has not by this time disappeared utterly. The Alhambra was, until a very recent period, literally vanishing piecemeal—one knavish governor carrying off so many cart-loads of enamelled tiles; another corrupt administrator purloining so many hundred feet of lead piping; this custode smashing a peerless porcelain vase to fragments, and selling the bits to curious amateurs from the West; and that doorkeeper wrenching the Moorish locks off the doors—marvels many of these of design and workmanship—to sell them as old iron. Why not? asks the Spaniard. The half-loathed, half-contemned Moriscos could surely have no past for which a Spanish *caballero* need care. Their arts, their learning, their science were all heterodox, and therefore damnable. Hence the lavish employment of the whitewasher's brush; hence the ruthless mutilation and garbling of perfect Moorish structures with the grossest architectural incongruities.

There may be educated Spaniards who appreciate and even give a qualified admiration to the taste and beauty of the Mauresque period, but the mass of the people are totally indifferent to the existence of the Arab remains around them, or regard them with repugnance. Wherever they have been able they have either hidden, spoilt, or destroyed the monuments of the brightest epoch in the history of Spanish civilization—a civilization which, from the conquest of Granada to the Christino-Carlist wars, had been, for more than three hundred years, steadily declining. Nor is it of Moorish

antiquities alone that the Spaniards are disdainful. They have a dim notion that they are descended from Hercules and other Olympian notabilities; but they are supremely unmindful of the relics of Roman art which abound in their land. Their admiration even for painting stops at the painters and sculptors of their own school, or those who were in some way connected with Spain—such as Titian, who painted so many Spanish grandees. For Rafaelle they make an exception. He painted so many Virgins; and the national religion of Spain is the worship of the Virgin Mary, and nothing else. They are proud—and have a right to be proud—of their own artists; but the pleasure they derive from their works is enhanced by the fact that the vast majority of those masterpieces are on religious subjects. If Zurbaran had painted brigands instead of monks; Morales cottage scenes instead of *Nacimientos;* and if Murillo had not atoned for a few beggar boys by a whole legion of holy *niños,* those famous painters would long since have lost half their hold on the Spanish mind.

The choir of the mosque—I must speak of it now as the cathedral—is sadly out of keeping with the grand old groves of pillars around; but, isolated, or with a nave and aisles to correspond, it would be a very imposing structure. Architecturally, it would seem impossible for the Spaniard to do anything absolutely petty. Even his whitewashing is on a gigantic scale. Even his solecisms are colossal. This choir at Cor-

dova was built at the end of the sixteenth century. The style is bastard classic, florid to excess with ornamentation. In Western Europe this would be called Rénaissance or Cinque-Cento; here it is known as the *Estelo plateresio,* from the surface decoration being as richly and elaborately wrought as a chiselled piece of plate. The sixty-three stalls of the choir are as flowery and pompous as Louis XIV.'s wig, but are magnificent specimens of the wood-carver's art, nevertheless. Opposite the choir is the *altar mayor,* with a *retablo* or reredos of rosy jasper from Carcabury, designed about 1618 by a Jesuit named Matias Alonso. If I remember aright, the first edition of the famous Perspective *"par un Religieux de la Compagnie de Jesus,"* is dated 1640. There is a coeval, or slightly earlier work, on architecture and decoration by another Jesuit, Serlices, I think, by name, anglicised by his gruff English translator into "Surly."

You see now, you may see in scores more Spanish churches, the notable use made by Saint Ignatius' sable soldiers of their researches into perspective and architecture. They interpreted the Rénaissance after their own fashion. They were revivalists of true Jesuit mould. It is curious to observe how in the architectural monuments reared by these accomplished artists —draftsmen, mathematicians, engineers, decorators as they were, and not above aiding the secular arm now and then with a neat treatise on fortification—how completely they ignored the Moorish style; because

they were bigoted enough to hate the Moors and the Gothic style, because they were astute enough to understand that Gothic architecture had done its work, and that it was too imaginative and mystical to suit the times in which they lived. The Gothic and the Moorish were at least genuine, original, and individual types in ecclesiastical construction. The Jesuits simply desired the Moorish, and threw the Gothic overboard. They were determined to combat the priests of Lutheranism and Calvinism, with their naked and unadorned fanes, by means of all the sensuous arms of artistic paganism. They eagerly brought back the Græco-Roman, smothered it in fruits and flowers, and scrolls and lions' heads, and other Plateresque paraphernalia. Look through Sebastian Sulius's huge folio, and you will find models drawn to scale of all the best known types of interior decoration adopted by the Jesuits in their churches in Spain, in Austria, and in Antwerp. These men seemed to be born to touch everything, and master everything, and triumph over everything for a season, but always to leave it miserably debased and corrupted. They seized upon the Rénaissance, twisted it to suit the bent of their own perverted minds, overburdened it with torso columns and rich friezes and cornices; but by the time they were driven out of Spain, the Rénaissance had fallen from the Plateresco into the Churrigurresque, which may be best defined as the poetry of Sir Richard Blackmore in architecture—stilted, diffuse, bombastic, garish, and

unmeaning. I cannot look with patience on these monuments, common to satiety in this country where the Jesuits were the great designers of high altars and *retablos*. They are but Jesuit rhetoric and Jesuit casuistry in carved wood and gilt bronze, and the "rosy jasper of Carcabury:" very splendid, very sounding, very specious, but choked and suffocated with dialectic niceties, and tropes, and flourishes; gilt weeds and spangled tares, in short, and, beyond the wood and jasper they worked in, never a morsel of reality anywhere.

The world has not much reason to be thankful to Charles V., who, mighty sovereign as he was, appears to me to have been merely a morose despot, devoured by the most selfish and insatiable ambition; who, when his gout and his gloom had made him intolerable to human society, hid his miserable sensations under a monk's cowl, and died at last at Yuste, very much after the fashion, as Swift has it, of a "poisoned rat in a hole." But Charles had a taste for art, and it is somewhat to his credit that he rated the dean and chapter soundly, when, on coming to Cordova, he discovered what fantastic tricks they had played with the matchless mosque. He exclaimed, indignantly, "I was not aware of this, for had I known that you intended to touch the ancient portion I would not have permitted it. You have built here what can be built anywhere else; but you have destroyed what was unique in the world." Carlos Quinto was excited to speak as an

*aficianado*—as a connoisseur. He had seen the *Moyen Age* marvels of the Low Countries. He would not have suffered a Moorish minaret on Antwerp's graceful spire, or horse-shoe arches to be knocked out of the wall of the Town House at Brussels. He knew, in a word, what fitness and propriety were; and it might be allowable for an American, on reading his memorable rebuke to the Cordovese chapter, to exclaim, "Bully for you, Charles V."

But this choir and *retablo*, and its forty odd excrescent lateral trumpery, full of gimcracks and idolatrous frippery, are but spots on the sun. The conditions of African landscape are here reversed. These things are deserts, and are scattered in the midst of one vast and smiling oasis. We can always come back to our columns; in which let me remark one curious feature I have hitherto omitted to mention. I said they looked as though they had been "thrust" into the ground. Such is literally the fact, for the columns have no bases. Some travellers have assumed that the soil of the mosque has, in process of time, risen—that the actual pavement is much higher than the original one, and that the bases are below ground; but recent excavations have proved the idea to be in truth baseless. The reason is obvious. Abderrahman got his pillars from wheresoever he could. They came, indeed, in monstrous fasces from three quarters of the globe, and notwithstanding the ordinary exactitude of antique measurement, it was not to be expected that they would

all be of one size. Abderrahman improved on the story of Procrustes. He was determined that his arches should all be of one height, and he dug his pillars into the earth until they accommodated themselves to the altitude allotted to them. Long pillars or short pillars, they were all bound to be of precisely the same height, like the Preobajinsky regiment of grenadiers.

The Mihrab, or sanctuary of the Mosque, all dark little nook as it is, is justly accounted one of the wonders of the world. It is but a recess, an alcove, a boudoir, but it was the Mahometan holy of holies. It is of heptagonal form, thirteen feet in diameter, and with a cupola twenty-seven feet high. The roof is formed by a most exquisitely-sculptured shell in white marble, and in one block. This shell, they say, belonged to the old Roman Temple of Janus. The Moors found it hereabout, and as it did not assume any of the forms prohibited by their creed, they wisely utilized it in their Mihrab. All round the heptagon run triform arches on marble pillars with gilt cornices, and the cornice is thick with Arabic inscriptions in characters of gold. There was once to be seen, until some thief unknown stole it, the casket of Al-Hakim II., made of ivory and precious woods, and of gems inlaid and fastened with nails of pure gold. It cost a million sterling. In it was kept the copy of the Koran made by Othman, and stained by his blood.

But the most wonderful part of the Mihrab is the mosaic tessellation of its kaaba or cupola. The sacristan

puts a bit of lighted taper at the end of a long stick, and holding it high in air slowly sways it from side to side. Then you see a glistening, as of diamonds and rubies, as of emeralds and sapphires. This is the world-renowned mosaic of Cordova, the Psephosis of the Greek, the Moorish Sofeysafah, the most wonderful example of the art brought from Byzantium anywhere extant. The mosaic in St. Mark's is dull and earthy in comparison with this glittering stone jewellery, with its resplendent hues and brilliant sheen. Dr. Salviati, of Venice, might bite his nails off with envy to look upon it. They have got here the real vitreous glaze—the glaze which gives to bits of flint, glass, and metal the appearance, and almost the texture, of gold and gems brocaded on satin. For the design and even the material of this Abderrahman was again indebted to his Christian cousin at Constantinople, the Greek Emperor Leo, who sent him a batch of artists skilled in mosaic work, and 325 quintals of the precious enamel.

The exterior of the Mosque does not correspond in magnificence to its interior. Apart from the belfry, which is of the last century—a belfry which is Spanish and absolutely hideous—the outside walls, though of enormous length, look low. They are decidedly Moorish, though strengthened here and there by square buttressed towers, and battlemented in the approved "barbated" or dentated style which the Western warriors brought home from the Crusades,

and applied to the "barbicans." There is a magnificent courtyard, called the *patio de los naranjos*, full of orange-trees, laden with fruit; but they are Seville oranges and bitter, else the juvenile population of Cordova would commit the most disastrous ravages upon them. This *patio*, however, or rather its trees, is the work of the Spaniards. In the time of the Moors the courtyard was full of fountains for the purposes of religious ablution. The horse-shoe arches, now filled in with grim Newgate masonry, to form external walls, were then open. In fact you could see right through the Mosque. It was but a colossal assemblage of colonnades, and the evening breeze would circulate freely through the marble forest.

I stayed in this enchanted place full four hours, much to the disgust of the "rock scorpion" from Gibraltar, who from time to time respectfully hinted that pulmonary complaints were not uncommon from long haunting these old Moorish houses. Yes, "rock scorpion," it was a Moorish house, and fated to be the Mosque of Cordova to the end of the chapter. There was not a priest to be seen about. There was not, for all the forty odd excrescent chapels, a single worshipper visible. Besides the scorpion and an old man in a cloak, who earned a *peseta* by lighting up the place, no living being was in this enormous pile save myself and a dog, who ventured in probably on the mistaken assumption that, although an unclean animal to the Moslem, by Christians he might be tolerated. But the

little old man in the cloak drove forth this unlicensed citizen of Cordova from the sacred precincts. I can still hear his cry of "Ah, perro, perro!" It was a feeble cry, for he must have been nearly eighty: but it woke up ten thousand echoes in the forest of marble, and I remembered once more the French surgeon in the woods of Guiana. I would have stayed here the whole day, but I was bound to go back to a horrible fonda, and to the bagmen and the *puchero*, and the tobacco smoke, and to work. I daresay that in the foregoing I have been tedious; but I have dwelt to this length on the Mosque of Cordova for two very simple reasons: first, that I never saw so extraordinary a place before; next, because I believe that another place so extraordinary is not to be found in the whole world.

## CHAPTER XXII.

THE BACKWARD CAREER OF SPAIN—"RELIGIOUS UNITY"—THE FINE ARTS—DEPORTATION OF THE MOORS AND JEWS—INDUSTRIAL DECLINE OF SPAIN—EFFECT OF THE DISCOVERY OF THE INDIES.

SPAIN, say those who know her well, as well as those who have studied her but indifferently or not at all, is a very backward country—the most backward, perhaps, in Europe. In so far all are agreed. When I stated, at the commencement of these remarks, that she was as backward as Turkey, and more backward than Egypt, my statement was one of which the form might be distasteful to many Spaniards, but whose fundamental truth is beyond controversy. Still, in what is Spain really behindhand? In what consists her retrogression? What is the reason that she lags so far in the rear, or neglects to enter herself at all in the race of European civilization? That "Africa begins at the Pyrenees" is a very old saying, half geographical by land—for few can doubt that where now are the Straits of Gibraltar there was once a neck of dry land, —and half metaphorically correct. Let me strive to point to a few of the things in which Spain is back-

ward, and to guess at some of the reasons for her lack of advancement.

The sovereigns of Spain, from Ferdinand and Isabella to Philip II., and, in a modified degree, their successors down to the period of the French Revolution, spent many millions of treasure, and wasted the lives of many thousands of human beings, in procuring and maintaining in their territories that identity of religious creed or religious delusion to which they gave the name of religious unity. The ultimate futility of the endeavour to make all men think alike in matters of theology must have been uppermost in the mind of Charles V. when at Yuste he fell into a passion at not being able to make all the watches which he was so fond of tinkering keep the same time. In his faulty cog-wheels and defective balances he foresaw what must be the eventual result of winding-up the minds of his subjects to a given pitch, and requiring them, under pain of temporal annihilation, to strike the religious hours and quarters with simultaneous precision. Charles, with all his bigotry, was a shrewd, travelled man; and though he did his best to stamp and burn out schism and dissent throughout his empire, was not so blind as to ignore the power of the reformed doctrines, and the difficulty of keeping his subjects for ever and ever in the old royal road of pagan popery. His son Philip, more obstinate and more narrow-minded, not only continued the traditional policy of his father in regard to "religious unity," but absolutely believed in the possibility of its ultimate

and permanent success. The crusade against dissent culminated in the reigns of his two immediate successors, and the profligate Duke of Lerma, who persuaded his indolent and idiotic master to expel the Jews and the Moors from the kingdom they had enriched by their industry and ingenuity, put the coping-stone to an edifice which, illumined by the genial glow of the fires of the Inquisition, remained an amazing monument of human tyranny and folly until it was knocked to pieces by Napoleon the Great, to be temporarily patched and cobbled up by the wretched petticoat embroiderer, Ferdinand, but to be definitively razed to the ground by the Carlist-Christino war and the subsequent measures of Mendizabal—never, it is to be hoped, to rear its preposterous head again.

It is quite necessary to my purpose to revert to those dead and gone nuisances, for the backward career of Spain may be said, without any exaggeration, to date from the conquest of Granada and the consolidation of the entire Spanish monarchy, as it now exists, under the sceptre of Ferdinand and Isabella. I will pass by the long anterior ruin and depopulation of Cordova. Perhaps the race of that city was run, like that of Tyre and Sidon; perhaps its civilization was not of a nature to merge into that of a more advanced age; perhaps it was better that Seville should be the capital of Andalusia. But the capture of Granada is an event belonging almost to modern history. It was coeval, within a few years, with the conquest of Constantinople by the

Turks:—so closely indeed did the two dramas tread on each other's heels, that there were not wanting those who declared that the subjugation of the last Moorish stronghold in Spain by the champions of the Cross was a direct and providential compensation for the triumph of the Crescent at Byzantium. Suppose, however, that Mahomet the Conqueror, when he found himself installed in the palace of Constantine Palæologus, instead of repeating some pretty verses out of the Persian anthology, and then proceeding to make himself comfortable in the abode of the Imperial Cæsars, had systematically set to work to ruin and depopulate the city, the possession of which, after so many direful struggles, he had won? The Turks certainly turned Santa Sofia into a mosque, destroyed all ancient monuments having any representations of the human face or figure, and rebuilt a greater portion of Constantinople after their own peculiar notions of architecture; but barbarous and intolerant as they were said to be, fanatically attached to their own religion, and contemptuously averse to the profession of any other faith, they did not insist upon "religious unity" in the country their swords had conquered. They did not forcibly expel the Gauls, the Armenians, the Copts, and the Jews from Stamboul, as the Spaniards expelled the Moors and the Israelites from the South of Spain. The result was that they did not utterly ruin their new-found inheritance. Constantinople continued to be, as it still remains, in point of population and commercial and

political importance, one of the foremost cities in the world; and the Turk, although he has been compassionated for ever so many years as a "sick man," still holds his own, can still make peace and war, and can still borrow money at something under fifteen per cent. on the Exchanges of Europe.

To that monstrous fetish of religious unity—that Moloch, rather, at whose bloody shrine so many human victims were sacrificed—Spain certainly owes a few advantages. The fine arts flourished exceedingly during the long and disastrous period of the Inquisition's sway. They flourished, it must be remarked, in or after a fashion exclusively Spanish. The illustrious painters whose canvasses are still the glory of Spain and, the admiration of the world—the Murillos, the Riberas, the Zurbarans, the Canos worked literally under the eye of the familiars of the Inquisition. The *Censory Veedor* of the Holy Office constantly visited their studios to make sure that they produced no heterodox works. They were forbidden to practise dissection with a view to the study of anatomy; they might not keep a skeleton to draw from; study even of the naked human figure was frowned down; their chief models were monks and the lugubrious and heavily-massed draperies in which nuns and friars shrouded themselves. To depict human passions, to record on canvass the march of human events, to illustrate the delightful creations of the poet and the romancist's fancy—to have done this, in the seventeenth century, would in a Spanish painter

have been deemed suspicious and all but heretical. One master only, Velazquez, disdained to give up to the service of idolatry that which was meant for mankind; and, strengthened by royal patronage, gave full scope to the universality of his genius; but his compeer Murillo, although he has left us a few charming scenes of gipsy and beggar-boy life to remind us that he too was human, and that nothing in humanity was indifferent to him, was condemned, I do not say involuntarily, to pass the best years of his life in a state of splendid slavery to Bigotry, Fanaticism, and Priestcraft, and to waste the powers of his immortal genius in illustrating the phases of a gross and idolatrous superstition, and in giving form and symmetry and beauty to the monstrous lies miscalled miracles which had been imagined by madmen, or dreamt of by ignorant rustics, or conceived by crafty friars. It was part of the "religious unity" system to make all men believe in a she-goddess, and to place the Venus Salambo of paganism on an altar higher than that of the unseen and inconceivable Creator of the universe: and with devotional diligence Murillo has filled the churches and convents of Spain with madonnas and children; but the man's own strong human feeling revolted, perhaps unconsciously, against the task of perpetually embodying a preposterous abstraction. His virgins are women — pretty Spanish women, but womanly and fleshly in every touch; while his infants — the far-famed *niños de Murillo*, are just one and two year old

babies of the delightful type described by Mr. Anthony Trollope in "Barchester Towers" as the object of the idolatry, from their pretty necks to their pretty heels, of Eleanor and Mary Bold.

Not less undeniable is it that, while Painting, under strict ecclesiastical supervision and confined to one narrow channel, made stupendous strides in the darkest days of religious unity, the kindred arts of Sculpture and Architecture showed also an astonishing progress, and raised the artists of Spain to the loftiest of positions among their brethren. There are in Spain the remains of some of the most magnificent Gothic cathedrals to be found anywhere in Europe. The north and centre of the country are also rich in examples of the Rénaissance or Plateresco style. So much of church plate and jewelled work as has escaped the rapacity of the French is unsurpassed for beauty of design and delicacy of execution. The carved *retablos*, the rood-screens, the choir stalls and lecterns, the very doors and benches of Spanish churches are miracles of human patience, and taste and skill—miracles a hundred times more trustworthy than the fables they are usually designed to commemorate. As modellers, as chasers, as jewellers, as embroiderers of rich stuffs, the Spaniards were perhaps, for a couple of centuries, supreme among the artificers of Europe; and although they never succeeded in equalling in their tapestry the soft texture of the Flemish looms, nor ever contrived to give to painted glass the glowing hues the production of which was

among the dearest-prized secrets of the German free-masons, there is no country where fairer specimens of imported tapestry or painted glass are to be seen than in Spain.

All the praise, however, which might justly be meted out to a nation which had attained such proficiency in the arts becomes negative, nay, is almost transmuted to censure, when it is remembered that the product of all this genius and all this labour served no useful or beneficent end. The peerless pictures were hung up in dim chapels, or behind altars, to be speedily rendered greasy and obscure by the fumes of incense and the soot of torches, or even prostituted to the adornment of the dressing-rooms where the actors in ecclesiastical mummeries changed their stoles and copes. The wonderful embroideries were hidden away in cupboards and presses, only to be brought out at appointed times of solemn harlequinade. The sumptuous goldsmiths' ware was shut up in iron safes, to be paraded only at stated intervals and as depositories for rags and bones belonging to dead men. The noble Gothic and Rénaissance edifices, in fine, served but as shrines for a gigantic exhibition of fraud and imposture, under the vain pretext of doing honour to Him who dwells in a temple not made with hands, and who should be better propitiated by a beggar kneeling alone in the midst of a desert, than by a pontiff, mitred and crosiered, standing beneath a dome glowing with frescoes and mosaics. Under this most shallow and mischievous delusion—a

delusion which has worked woes untold for thousands of years, and retarded for centuries the civilization of the world—all that was ingenious, all that was tasteful, all that was laborious in Spain was taken up and monopolized and wasted in one colossal, and continual, and systematic violation of the second commandment. To making unto themselves graven images, and the likenesses of things in heaven above and the earth beneath and the waters under the earth, in order that they might bow down to them and worship them, the priests and the sovereigns who were priest-ridden compelled their subjects to devote their abilities and their energies.

The result is patent to all men at the present day in Spain. The mills of God have ground so slowly, yet so exceedingly small, that scarcely any vestige of ancient civilization remains. Little by little religious unity has eaten like a cankerworm into the strong beams and joists of the land, until the whole fabric is ready to give way. While there is no country in Europe where ecclesiastical edifices are more numerous or have been more splendid, there is not one so ill provided with what are usually termed "public buildings." I leave the Escorial and the Palace at Madrid out of the calculation as exceptional and phenomenal, but certainly it is rare to find a single building in any Spanish city of any architectural pretensions or of any artistic merit but is, in some way or other, connected with the church. The purely secular ones are as a rule struc-

turally beneath contempt. A papist might point to this fact as a cheering instance of how great is the power of religion, and how beautiful it is to see all the works of humanity based upon a religious foundation. There was an abortive newspaper started once, I think—the *Dial* was its name, if I remember aright—which bore for epigraph the pious quotation that "Righteousness exalteth a nation." Religious unity and righteousness may be in the eyes of some critics synonymous, and the priests according to such a theory would be quite right in absorbing all the best painters and sculptors and architects, and modellers, and goldsmiths, and embroiderers in Spain into the service of the Holy Mother Church; but looking at the case practically, and by merely mundane lights, we find that righteousness failed to exalt the Spanish nation, and on the contrary succeeded in ruining and depraving it.

When Granada was conquered there were in Spain Moorish and Jewish physicians and surgeons fit to be named in at least the same category as Ambrose Paré, and Sydenham, and Harvey. They had written learned works on lithotomy and the circulation of the blood, years before the illustrious practitioners I have named were heard of. There were Moorish mathematicians and astronomers not unworthy to claim fellowship with Kepler, and Copernicus, and Galileo. A hundred and fifty years after the conquest of Granada Doctor Sangrado had become the type, and not a caricatured one, of the Spanish *medico*. To accurate records of solar

and lunar observations, and the laws of winds and tides compiled by Arabian sages had succeeded Popish almanacs which scouted as damnable the theory of the earth's movement, and apportioned the days of the year among dubious saints and mythical martyrs. The Moors were sedulous and scientific farmers and horticulturists. The old Macheni de Marly, the water-works at London Bridge from which Paley took his famous image, were baby toys in comparison with the hydraulic machines whose employment by the Moors in Andalusia and Granada rest on no dim tradition, but is attested by remains of the machines themselves; yet the modern Spaniards have absolutely gone back to the agricultural barbarism of their Iberian and Celtiberian ancestors; and are only just beginning to irrigate or manure their fields, and with the same implements of husbandry which were in their hands when Julius Cæsar overran their confines. It was deemed necessary for the accomplishment of religious unity that the Jews and the Moors should be thrust out of the land; so away they went, more than a million strong, carrying with them not only the arts, but the industry and the wealth of Spain. The injury inflicted on France by the revocation of the Edict of Nantes, and the expulsion of the Huguenot silk-weavers —a measure quite as mad and wicked as that of Lerma —was petty and trivial as compared with the tremendous woe worked on Spain by the wholesale deportation

of the most laborious, the most skilful, and the most docile of her population.

The blow dealt to her for the sake of religious unity she has never recovered. With the Jews and the Moors went the thousands of silk and carpet weaving looms which once brought affluence to Seville. With them went method and regularity in accounts and a correct knowledge of banking; entire trades, crafts, and manufactures disappeared. One, and an important one it was, survived. The Moorish cutlers, full of the good old traditions of Damascus and Bagdad, had taught the Spaniards how to make and temper weapons of war, and to decorate their hilts and blades with exquisite devices; and for a long period following the expulsion of the Moors, Toledo continued to produce those marvellous swords whose handles might be the despair of Benvenuto Cellini, and whose blades are so cunningly tempered that they will bend like whalebone and curl up as tightly as watchsprings. But even this manufacture has declined of late years; and swords made at Paris are now sold at Toledo as fabricated in the locality, just as at Murano mirrors, with the Parisian maker's trade-mark hastily effaced, are sold as genuine Venetian looking-glasses.

At the present day, I do not know any country—always excepting Catalonia—where it is so difficult to procure anything which you can carry away to serve as a memorial of your sojourn. You have heard of Cor-

dovan leather, but at Cordova the making of ornamental leather work has sunk into the production of a few clumsy gaiters and surcingles. There is a little goldsmith's work in filagree produced at Seville, but very inferior to that which the craftsman of Genoa, and Algiers, and Malta can turn out. At Malaga you may buy some pretty *papier-mâché* figures of *majos* and *majos* and *contrabandistos;* and now and then your eye may be stricken by the picturesque arrangement of the stripes in a blanket, the quaint embroidery on a donkey's trappings, or the symmetrical form of a water pitcher or an oil jar; but beyond such odds and ends as these Spain seems to be desolate of any special and characteristic fabrics. Her fans, her guitars, her lace mantillas, come from Paris, or Bordeaux, or Marseilles; and even on her tables when the rare wine flagon makes its appearance it generally contains French claret. She was so well drilled into religious unity for two hundred and fifty years that her hand lost its cunning for any secular craft, and she forgot how to make anything but pyxes and chalices or monstrances; to embroider anything but copes and stoles, and banners for the *Hermandad de la Pasion*—to paint anything but the flamed devils on the *San benitos*. From 1740 to 1815, nearly a century, she produced only one decent engraver, by name Goya, an artist of rare but erratic talents; and it is probable that he, sooner or later, would have got into trouble with the Holy Office had he not been a painter as well, and produced some square

feet of saints and virgins, the models for which were apparently selected from the class of *dames* not *comme il faut*, but *comme il en faut*.

A great many Spaniards will tell you that the real cause of the industrial decline of Spain was not the dull, leaden, heavy oppression of mumbo-jumbo, with its religious unity, and its *Censores y Veedores*, and its *autos da fè*, but the discovery of the Indies—I mean of South America and its metallic treasures. At this time of day I do not intend to inflict upon the reader any remarks concerning the mines of Potosi; but I am inclined to think that had Spain not been cursed with a predominant Roman Catholic Church, she would have suffered no more harm by the addition to her empire of a vast continent gorged with gold and silver than the Americans have suffered by the discovery of gold in Australia, or than we have endured by the development of the Australian diggings. It was Mumbo-Jumbo who, with characteristic and consistent greed, stepped in to divert the major portion of the wealth of the Indies to the service of its own ends. It was Mumbo-Jumbo who, until so recently as the visit to New Spain of Alexander von Humboldt, made Mexico a secret and tabooed land inaccessible to all but those who contentedly bore the yoke and obeyed the behests of religious unity; it was Mumbo-Jumbo who quietly and slily planted the South American continent, from Panama to Paraguay, with groups of Jesuit missionaries, who by the adroit assimilation of the silken idolatry of popery

to the prior and barbaric rites of the poor redskins, effected the subjugation, the exploitation and the retention in ignorant servitude of millions of docile and affectionate creatures who, with better teachers and better training, might have become by this time educated, civilized, and prosperous. The Emperor Maximilian of Mexico has a difficulty to contend with of which Europeans know very little. That difficulty is five millions strong—five millions of human beings called Indians; and he has to thank his co-religionists, or at least their predecessors, the Spanish American priesthood, for having kept those millions and their forefathers, from the days of Cortes to those of Juarez, in a state of mental degradation very little above that of the beasts which perish.

## CHAPTER XXIII.

MIDDLE CLASS MISERY IN SPAIN—THE "MONTE PIO" AND THE "LEAVING SHOPS"—THE TRADING CLASSES —FRUGALITY AND TEMPERANCE OF THE LOWER ORDERS —UNIVERSAL LOVE OF GAMBLING—SPANISH FARMERS AND PEASANTS.

A CURSORY or an inattentive traveller in Spain is very apt to carry away an impression that the whole country is sunk in a degree of poverty which approaches destitution—first, from the patent pecuniary difficulties of the Government and the railways—difficulties which are perpetually dinned in his ears—and next, from the very painful exhibition of extreme indigence which meets his view, not only among the lower but the more respectable classes in the large cities. Holding, as I do, very strongly by Mr. Gladstone's newly enunciated "flesh and blood" doctrine, it is still necessary for any purpose of coherent argument to employ terms of comparison; and in the present constitution of human society, it is unhappily an impossibility to avoid the recognition of more or less repectable, and of low, lower, and lowest grades in the community. In Madrid, for instance, notwith-

standing the throng of splendid equipages on the Prado, and the continuous tide of gaily-dressed ladies and gentlemen in such thoroughfares as the Callo de Alcalà, and the Carrera San Geromino, your attention is continually drawn to the presence of a large amount of middle-class misery: often the most lamentable misery of all. The benches on the side walks are tenanted by herds of melancholy beings, in the last stage of shabby gentility, with worn fans and thread-bare garments, who have evidently nothing to do, and next to nothing to keep body and soul together. On the thresholds, and even in the dim aisles and chapels of the churches, there are always groups of beggars: not only such badged and theatrically ticketed mendicants as I have striven to pourtray in my descriptions of Baylen and the Escorial, but decently-dressed men and women, whose pinched and half-famished, yet shrinking and shamefaced mien must be either due to unfeigned distress, or to the profoundest hypocrisy. Add to these the many lingerers on the Puerta del Sol, who are not simply indolent "mooners," but really forlorn and impoverished creatures, who would be glad to dig, but, failing that resource, are not ashamed to beg. Even among your well-dressed acquaintances there are many whom you can only hope to meet at a café or some kindred place of public resort. They dare not tell you where they live, lest you should call upon them, and the wretchedness in which they vegetate should thus be revealed.

The periodical sales of the *Monte Pio*, or governmental pawnbroking establishment, offer in their catalogue of unredeemed pledges a sad record of the straits to which Spanish respectability is too often reduced; but there are also numerous families, occuping a rank far above what we term the "middle" one who, in the struggle between pride and poverty, shrink from borrowing money at the public pawnbrokers, and seek aid at the hands of the keepers of "leaving shops" and *revendeuses à la toilette*, who after a certain period become the owners of the property on which they have made advances, or, in some instances, act as intermediaries between those who have anything precious to sell and those who have a wish to buy. With more than one astute connoisseur or collector of articles of *virtù* have I come in contact, who—disdaining the services of old curiosity vendors in Wardour Street or Hanway Yard, and troubling himself even very little about the catalogues of auction sales of rare articles, but which, so soon as it is known that you collect anything, from missals to mussel-shells, are sure to be sent to you from all parts of Europe, and even from the United States—makes periodical journeys to Madrid and Seville, and Toledo and Valladolid, for the purpose of picking up artistic and archæological rarities through the medium of the leaving shops. They are not the connoisseurs—the sciolists rather—who are taken in by the sham Murillos and Zurbarans of the professional dealers, and who give thousands of pounds sterling for the sweepings

of suppressed convents and the rejected replicas of provincial museums. They go about their work slily, silently, and unostentatiously, for a genuine collector should be a kind of amalgam of the Highland deer-stalker and the trapper of the Western prairies. They will take days and weeks in hunting down their prey—in spreading their nets and baiting their hooks. Mysterious men in cloaks pass backwards and forwards. Mysterious visits are paid to the remote parts of Madrid. Carriages are made to wait at the corner of one street, while the curiosity hunter pops into a house at the corner of another. Cigars of inscrutable secrecy are smoked; Isabellinos and ounces make a furtive jingling in dusky palms; confidential bank notes crackle stealthily; then some morning your collector, your antiquary, your picture fancier comes to you, radiant, and tells you that for comparatively a mere song he has bought an undeniable Alonzo Cano, a Murillo with a pedigree as faultless as Gladiateur's, an illuminated manuscript of the twelfth century as bright and glowing as a page in the "Grammar of Ornament," a complete suit of Milan armour, marvellously damascened, a statuesque ciborium, or a set of Byzantine cameos from the custodia of a chapel belonging to some bygone princely family. Middle class—high class misery, sometimes has helped the collector to obtain all these treasures, not without infinite pains, but still dirt cheap. Bit by bit the much-prized heirlooms, the plate, the jewels, the rare tapestry, the lace, the carved and

chiselled woods, the emblazoned minarets and ivory caskets, the Toledo blades and arabesqued pistols have been parted with. Balzac used to tell of a "Black Band" of *raconteurs*, who, in the early days of Louis Philippe's reign, went about the French provinces and silently bought up unfaded finery of the noblesse of the old *régime*, ruined by the downfall of the Bourbons. The "leaving shops" and the astute connoisseurs are doing for the poorer Spanish gentry—a class who offer many points of analogy with the Bernadotti, or poor gentlemen under the old Republic of Venice—that which the Black Band did for the worn-out invalids of the Œil de Bœuf.

Large cities are necessarily the chosen haunts of distressed people; first, because they can better hide their misery where humanity musters thickest, and next, because where the Court and the Government have their place, they hope to have the better chance of alleviating their condition. There may be, perhaps, not more distressed and expectant persons in Madrid at the present moment than there were when Gil Blas came to seek his fortune at the court of Philip IV., and when he met Don Roger de Rada at the cheap ordinary. But he who takes Madrid, or even Seville, which, as the capital of the South, has a certain metropolitan aspect, as types of the actual condition of Spain, will very probably go away with the notion that nothing which he has heard concerning the poverty and decrepitude of the country has been exaggerated. For the first few

days he will be delighted and amazed, as I was, with the gaiety and splendour of the metropolis, with the number and brilliancy of the shops, and the bravery and finery of the population. Next, when he sees side-by-side with this gaiety and splendour, the shabby-genteel and the begging element, and when he hears of all the middle-class misery, and all the mysterious transactions of the "leaving shops," he will be apt to fall into the opposite extreme of opinion, and infer that the real condition of the country is one of want and penury. He may be as mistaken in one estimate as in the other.

No doubt but there are plenty of poor Spaniards—the poorest and unhappiest among them are those who are too proud to work. They may be divided into numerous categories. There are the widows and daughters of officers in the military or civil service, for whom no adequate provision has been made, who cannot afford to pay even the modest dowry demanded by the convents for the admission of a nun, and who, unless they can snuggle under the protecting wing of some rich and pious lady, can do little more than hang about the churches, trust to the good nature of the clergy for some slight occasional assistance, and, as a last resource, beg in a cowering and abashed manner. These—many of them perfect ladies—are very numerous, and must become more numerous still as conventual revenues diminish. They are infinitely to be pitied. Not much better off are the *Cesantes*, individuals of the male sex

who have held small Government employments under the thousand-and-one administrations with which Spain has been cursed. They have not been absolutely turned adrift at the advent of a new ministry, but enjoy a kind of demi-semi-half-pay, which may be regarded either as a scant reward for past service, or a starting fee for a future one. These *Cesantes*, usually mouldy old gentlemen in the last stage of seediness, have often wives and families, and their miserable pensions just suffice to keep them from starving, but are quite inadequate to maintain them in comfort. They are all naturally in opposition. Toothless mumblings against the cabinet of the day, eke out their starveling meals, and snuffy predictions of the speedy downfall of the prevailing tyrant add a zest to the evening glass of cold water.

Of a cognate class, the *Pretendientes*, or people who have nothing, but persistently seek for something under Government, I have already spoken. *Cesantes* and *Pretendientes* together materially aid the foreigner in forming the dismalest impressions of Spanish neediness. But the existence of a large and hungry class of claimants for Government employment is not, I trust, an absolute proof of the distressed circumstances of any country. England is, with some show of reason, supposed to be one of the wealthiest, if not the very wealthiest, nation on earth; yet are the minds of the English middle class haunted by a strange delusion, that so soon as a boy has attained adolescence and his education, at the cost of many hundreds of pounds, has been

concluded, it is forthwith expedient to bore a member of Parliament or an under secretary, or somebody having, or supposed to have influence, for a "nomination" in a public office, whereby the youth who has been crammed as full as an egg is full of meat with Latin, Greek, French, German, drawing, and mathematics, may receive ninety pounds a year for idling away three-fourths of his time, and copying letters during the remaining quarter. Nor, perhaps, can the United States of America be considered as a very impoverished country. I have heard that in the Great Republic, notably in its Northern States, energy, industry, and brains, frequently supply the place of birth, connexions, and capital; and that he who is carting lumber by the quay side to-day, may in ten years be making his fifty thousand dollars a year. Yet that ravenous avidity for public employment, which in Spain goes under the name of *empleomania*, is quite as prevalent on the American continent as in the Iberian peninsula. The lobbies of the Capitol at Washington and the corridors at Willard's are really the only places in the States where you will meet with idle, unemployed, shabby-genteel men in a state of quiescence—"mooners" pure and simple; but who so soon as a minister, or a senator, or a representative passes, become sons of the horseleech, and are frantic after government employment. It is easier to understand the *empleomania* of England than the kindred crazes of Spain and the United States. In England a Government desk is irremovable. The Whigs may have

appointed him, but the Tories refrain from "cutting his head off" when they come into office; and although he begins at ninety pounds a year, he may, by dint of steady conduct, and a gradual increase in his salary, rise by the time he is grey to four or five hundred. The salaries of Spanish and American officials are wretchedly small, and they are liable to summary dismissal on the incoming of every new government. Every class, indeed, who eats the public bread is aware that at least three persons are watching through the window as he munches his food—that they envy him his meal, and that they are only preserved from despair by the hope of seeing him ere long kicked downstairs, and his trencher of victuals given to worthier folks; that is to say, to their worthy selves. Regarding the lot and prospects of the Spanish and the American Government class simply from this point of view, it is difficult to conceive what possible motive there can be for the *empleomania* of which they are the victims. Can there be any "unclean drippings of office?" any perquisites, legitimate, or illegitimate, to warrant them in perpetually hungering and thirsting after a berth in a Government office? This, however, is neither the time nor the place to ask such a question.

The secondary cities—Barcelona and Cadiz always excepted, and the other seaport towns in a minor degree—exhibit the same features of indigence and shabby genteel privation. *Pretendientes* clamour and *Cesantes* growl in the purlieus of the offices of provincial

Captains-General as they do before the office of the Gobernacion at Madrid. You will find reduced gentry, too, destitute officers' widows, and daughters, some upper-class misery, and much middle-class misery in such fading and stagnating towns as Burgos and Saragossa, as Granada and Jaen. The dispossessed monks, have not been very great sufferers by the suppression of the foundations on which, generally in unclean and ignorant, idleness they battened. Many have become priests, and many more have abandoned the cowl for the apron and gone into the retail trade. Nine-tenths of the really poor Spaniards are either hereditary beggars, cripples, idiots or irredeemable loafers; or else they are persons of decent position, too proud or too prejudiced to do anything for a living. Able-bodied pauperism among the people properly so called is unknown. Child-beggars, save among the vagrant gipsies who burrow like rabbits in the mountain-sides at Granada, or sprawl at the entrances of the filthy lanes in the Triana at Seville, are never seen. There are plenty of street Arabs in Madrid; and ragged, dirty, and impudent enough in all conscience they are; but as destitute objects they are no more to be pitied than the newsboys of New York. They can all earn bread and a roof to cover them, and do earn those essentials by selling newspapers and cigar-lights—not as a cloak and pretext for begging, as is the case in London—but as merchandize yielding a fair profit, which everybody wants, and which everybody buys.

The real people of Spain are not poor. By the real people I mean the merchants, the tradesmen, the farmers, and the peasantry. As for the clergy, they have lost the enormous affluence with which they were formerly gorged—an Archbishop of Granada in 1666 was as wealthy as Rothschild in 1866—and the country is all the better for the diminution in their incomes; but the superior members of the hierarchy are still handsomely, and the parish priests decently paid; and there is enough devotion, not to say bigotry, left in Spain to keep the clergy of all ranks, and for some time to come, in a state of comfort bordering upon luxury. The wages paid to mechanics in Spain would appear to an Englishman or an American contemptible; yet the weekly wage of a Spanish carpenter or bricklayer not only suffices for all his wants, but enables him to lay something by. The same, in a different degree, is the case with the agricultural labourers. The same, again in degree, is the case with the factory hands in the North. At Valencia, again, thousands of hands, chiefly women and children, are employed in the fabrication of those *cerillos* or boxes of matches which I have formerly mentioned, and which for kindling the national *puro* or *cigarito* are so much an article of prime necessity, that every Spaniard from the tenderest age upwards carries one or more boxes of matches about his person, and it is almost as rude to ask your neighbour for a light as it would be to ask him for the loan of his pocket-handkerchief. Matches are only a

halfpenny a box, and it is inexcusable for you to be unprovided with them. The hat-makers of Malaga, the paper-makers of Almeria, the fig, and orange, and raisin packers of the Mediterranean littoral, the wine porters of Jerez and Cadiz, and the great army of *arrieros* or muleteers who are perpetually traversing the country in every direction, earn wages at which, perhaps, an English navvy or an Irish hod-carrier might sneer; but these millions do contrive to live on the wages of their labour, without being forced when they are out of work, or sick, or maimed, to throw themselves on their benefit clubs, or to apply for parish relief; and, on high-days and holidays they turn out in costumes which are not only quaint and picturesque, but are, in material and ornament, frequently very rich. For that, of course, there are very definite causes. The Spanish artisan or the Spanish peasant wants very little and consumes very little. Of the necessaries of life—in no case very expensive—he requires but the barest modicum. Habitually, and it would seem preferentially, he half starves himself. Although his country so teems with vines that at Val de Peñas the red wine is as cheap as water, and is sometimes, when the butts are required for the new vintage, emptied into the streets, or mixed with mortar for building purposes, the Spaniard is next-door to a teetotaller. His temperance is rigider even than that of the Mussulman, who, while he eschews alcohol, will drink quarts of sherbet, and imbibe coffee to excess. *Agua! agua!* and still *agua*—

cold water is all the Spaniard cares about after his solitary cup of chocolate in the morning. The *picadores* of the bull-ring and the porters of Cadiz are said to be *holgozanes* or drunkards; but apart from these exceptional and restricted cases a drunken Spaniard is about as phenomenal a person as a sober Dane. I insist the more closely on the extraordinary temperance of the Spanish man of the people for the reason that we know, or that we ought to know, *that every English working-man in constant employment might keep a comfortable home and lay by money every week were it not for the English gin-palace and the English beer-shop.* I believe that in most cases the Spanish workman does save. He would save more were it not for the sad fact that in most human elements of good there is an equipoise or counterbalance of evil.

The evils which neutralize the advantages of his extreme frugality and abstinence are, first, unaccountable fits of listless inertia; next, the national vice of gambling—a vice which is shamefully prevalent among all classes of Spaniards, high and low. In England most stabbing, or head-breaking, or nose-biting, or pot-throwing, or kicking, or red-hot poker branding, or wife-beating, or children-maiming cases are due to the drink. Drunkenness leads to the workhouse, the police cell, Bow Street, the Old Bailey, Portland, Dartmoor, and the gallows. In America, gouging, shooting, and bowie-knifing affrays are the almost invariable results of whisky. The direct road to Sing Sing is through

Bourbon county, Kentucky. In Spain if you wish to know what fills the *presidios* with convicts, what supplies the *garoto* with victims, and the *casas de locos* with lunatics, you have only to look on the Spaniards as they gamble. They pride themselves a great deal on the imperturbability with which they win or lose large sums; and this may be to a certain extent true of the elegantly-conducted *rouge et noir* tables in the clubs of Madrid and Seville—who ever saw a gentleman lose his temper at Wiesbaden or Hombourg?—but among the ignorant and impulsive labouring classes the case is very different. The "dicers' oaths" whose falsity is so proverbial may be heard to admiration on the banks of the Manzanares and the Guadalquivir, wherever a group of workmen are congregated during the hour of rest. From eternal squabbles over Monti and Tressilio come those deadly conflicts in which the murderous *navaja*—the Spanish bowie-knife—plays so grim a part. Even if the varying chances of the game are not further diversified during its progress by an occasional lunge, or a good back-handed slash, the ceaseless gaming of the labouring classes provokes ill-feeling which rankles in the blood till the quarrel is cleared up by an appeal to the *navaja*.

Some of the stabbing affrays which are the scandal of Spain—chiefly in the South and in its most primitive provinces—among the austere Castilians the use of the knife is almost unknown, and the turbulent Catalans, who in every respect closely resemble the Marseillais,

bawl and gesticulate much more than they stab—some of these *navaja* rows may be due to jealousy; although I am of opinion that most of the stories we have heard about Spanish jealousy are much exaggerated, seeing that duels among the upper classes are by no means frequent. Still cards and dice are the real fount and origin of that evil of blood-spilling which has rendered half nugatory the virtues of the Spaniard, and given him an unmerited character for ferocity and vindictiveness. Precisely as a Yankee when sober is a good-natured, intelligent, placable, and humane fellow, but when he is full of whisky is half fiend and half Bengal tiger; so is the non-gambling Spaniard courteous, dignified, amiable, and, to those he knows, generous. Get him over Monti or Tressilio, however—put the devil's books in his hands—and he is greedy, savage, and quarrelsome, and quite as ready to plunder you of your money as to stab you if you dispute his word. I need not say that these remarks apply exclusively to the lower classes, and have nothing whatever to do with those elegant saloons where thousands of dollars are won and lost without the movement of a muscle or the vibration of a nerve—where the bottomless pit is boarded over and handsomely carpeted—and where the devil, if he makes his appearance at all, wears straw-coloured kid gloves and diamond shirt studs, and is, in every respect *muy caballero*.

Dismissing this little *penchant* for cards and dice—and the money they lose must at all events be won by

somebody, and does not go out of the country—it seems plain enough that the lot of the Spanish working, labouring, and agricultural classes is not an unhappy one, and that they, who are after all the real strength and backbone of the country, are in no pauperized or decrepit condition. That gross ignorance exists throughout the provinces of Spain, from north to south and from east to west, is undeniable; and this ignorance is the more deplorable as among a perfectly illiterate population it is by no means rare to come across men and women who are shrewd, intelligent, naturally eloquent, and as full of mother-wit as Sancho Panza. The Spanish peasantry are probably not more ignorant than the French *habitants*, who, under the mild despotism of their parish priests, vegetate in the little hamlets on the banks of the St. Lawrence, between Montreal and Quebec. They are not more ignorant than the Indians whom the Jesuits of Paraguay kept for three centuries in a state of abject slavery, yet who were contented and even happy under the priestly yoke. Provincial ignorance of Spain approaches, perhaps, its term. Railways and newspapers must eventually fulfil their appointed work, and in another generation or so the rural Spaniard may be dragged out of the slough of duncehood in which he is at present embogued; but it must not be forgotten that education and civilization will create new wants or revive old ones; and that to satisfy those requirements the Spanish peasant—and even the Spanish farmer—

will have to disburse a little more ready money than he feels at present inclined to spend.

I am warranted in the assumption that Spain cannot be the poor and embarrassed country she is represented to be, by the fact that the revenue—now some two-and-twenty millions sterling—has been for years, and is in spite of all the fraud, corruption, and mismanagement of which we have heard so much—steadily augmenting, and that it is four times larger than it was at the last year of the reign of the Seventh Ferdinand. I am warranted by the fact of the immense productiveness of Spain, and by her producers receiving hard cash in exchange for their produce from European consumers, the which hard cash unaccountably disappears so soon as it gets into Spanish hands. I am warranted by the fact of the exemplary economy and frugality of the majority of Spaniards. They spend no money on buildings, they spend none on roads, or public or private works of any description. Their diet is that of hermits and anchorites—a little bread, a raw scrap of pork, or bacon, an egg or two, some garlic, some rancid oil, a few black beans, and an orange—there is the beginning and the end of their *cuisine*. As a rule they eat once in the twenty-four hours, and then very sparingly. Their breakfast would not satisfy a sparrow. They smoke incessantly; but if you smoke government cigars or government *papelitos* in Spain your expenditure for tobacco need not exceed twopence a-day. They live, in the country, in the simplest and rudest

manner. Beds are a luxury, furniture is a superfluity; a house with a chimney a wonder. Comfort has not yet been heard of.

When we bear all these things in mind, and when in addition we remember all the hogsheads of sherry, brown and dry, which Spain annually sends to England; all the Val de Peñas wine she despatches to Bordeaux and to Cette, to be there transformed into claret; all the millions of oranges, the figs, the raisins, the nuts, the almonds, the oil, the chemicals, the minerals, she exports,—assertions as to Spain being a poor country and her people impoverished become wildly absurd. The country is wonderfully rich, naturally, and would be three times richer were it irrigated, manured and tilled, more in accordance with the rules laid down in Stephens's "Book of the Farm," than with the time-honoured maxims contained in the Georgics of Virgil. Spanish farmers are between nineteen hundred and two thousand years behind the age in all that relates to husbandry; but they manage, in despite of wooden forks and pickaxe ploughs, and flails such as that which was used by the late Gideon, to raise very good crops, and to sell the contents of their barns for solid ounces, dollars, and pesetas. I believe them, to be, as a body, affluent. I believe there is an enormous amount of tangible, metallic wealth—downright coined money—in Spain, and that three-fourths of it lie buried in holes, and chinks, and caves, and under the planks of floors. How even wealth might be doubled, trebled,

quadrupled within a few years by judicious investment, by fostering railways, by improving farm-buildings, by buying agricultural implements a little less classical than those used by the labourers of king Admetus, a very slender acquaintance with political economy would suffice to prove; but the Spanish capitalist tells you, or at least allows you to surmise, that so long as the country is ruled by a government which is unstable, or which does not enjoy his confidence, he will continue to hold bolts, bars, padlocks and secrecy as the best securities for the preservation of his money, and will prefer that it should stagnate in deadness and inaction, doing no good to anyone, least of all to the owner, than that it should be employed in sensible enterprize, or even put out at moderate interest.

It is a bold assertion to make, and perhaps a rash one; but I nevertheless do assert that Spanish farmers, as a body, are much wealthier than English ones, and that the Spanish peasant is much better off, has more money to spend, and more good clothes, and more valuable trinkets for his wife and daughters to wear, than the English agricultural labourer. Will you find one Somersetshire clod-hopper in a hundred with a silver watch? one brickmaker's wife in fifty with a gold brooch or a pair of gold ear-rings? and if you wish to take the average of the ready money left in every English husbandman's pocket every Monday morning throughout the year, I will be bound to say that average would not exceed, did it reach, a penny a head.

The purely feudal nature of land tenure in England will continue until a revolution supervenes to keep the peasant in the condition of a serf and a villein, in all save the imposition of the collar and the dread of the thong. The only change that has taken place in his lot since the days of the Conquest is, that he is the villein of the tenant-farmer instead of the lord of the manor; but he is still Higg the son of Snell, or Gurth the son of Dawson, a thrall whose doom it is to toil, and who, unless he emancipate himself from agricultural servitude by taking the Queen's shilling and going for a soldier, has nothing to look forward to when his long life of toil is over but the asylum of the union workhouse. Even the English tenant-farmer is not a personage to be very much envied. If he can get a decent competence out of his farm, he is fortunate; if he makes a fortune out of it, he is a phenomenon. In the majority of instances he gets only a decently comfortable living from the acres he tills, and is sullenly aware that the more improvements he makes on his holding the stronger will be the temptation to his landlord to raise his rent.

There are very large landed proprietors in Spain—grandees who, like the Dukes of Ossuna, of Medina-Cœli, of Frias, of Villa Hermosa, can count their acres by the ten thousand; but the rent of land is low, often a mere peppercorn one; and the tenant-farmer is not a portly but submissive person in top-boots, who must cringe to my lord's steward, and submit to be bullied by

him, and must vote as my lord wishes, and shoot no rabbits unless my lord allows it, and is bound to admire *nolens volens* the questionable sport of fox-hunting when my lord and his friends come racketing over the tenant's fields with his horses and his hounds. The Spanish farmers do not appreciate fox-hunting, and make a terrible disturbance if their fields are ridden over, much to the discomfiture of the English officers who scamper out from Gibraltar with their garrison pack. When they have once hired their farm they are, so long as they pay their rent to the *administrador*, absolutely masters of it, and the running or creeping things upon it, and the wild fowls that fly over it. There are no game laws in Spain beyond those moderate and reasonable restrictions which prohibit devastation of another man's land, or fix the seasons when the killing of certain animals or birds after their kind is lawful.

The tenant-farmer class, moreover, do not constitute the majority of Spanish agriculturists. There is a very numerous class of persons owning their farms in fee simple — answering to the Mexican *rancheros*, to the French *hobereaux*, and to those old yeomen who were once the pride of England, but who seem to have almost entirely died out within our confines. The *ganaderos*, or cattle-breeders, and the proprietors of sheep and pigs, are among the wealthiest people in Spain; yet their social position is scarcely superior to that of the peasantry. In the South, wealthy orange-

growers, vine-growers, silk-growers abound. All these producers are certain of a ready and remunerative market for their produce. As much as ever they can send down to the coast, they know that they can sell and get the cash for. They are ten times better off than the wine-shippers of Jerez, and Cadiz, and Port St. Mary's, who have to run the risk of bad debts, of a fluctuating taste, and a capricious market, and who are often broken through imprudent speculation. The Spanish farmer never speculates, never invests. If you talk to him about security he grins, and points with his thumb over his shoulder, not to an immediate object, but vaguely, as the Mulligan pointed from the Oxford Circus towards the Marble Arch as the whereabouts of his address in town. "I live *there*," said the Mulligan. The Spanish farmer's investments on good security lie "there," too, in some occult strong box, or some well-concealed iron safe.

## CHAPTER XXIV.

THE EMBARRASSMENT OF THE SPANISH GOVERNMENT—SPANISH RAILWAYS—LAMENTABLE CONDITION OF THEM—THE NATIONAL BANK OF SPAIN—PREVALENCE OF BAD MONEY—HOARDING AMONG THE SPANIARDS.

IT cannot be denied that the scandalous procrastination shown by the Spanish Government in the settlement of its external indebtedness has alienated from it the respect of the moneyed classes all over Europe; that, out of Spain, Spanish credit is a non-entity; and that her very name, financially speaking, has become a by-word and a reproach in the mouths of those who once envied her the possession of the wealth of the Indies. So widely spread—always through the unhappy certificate business—has become the belief in the virtual bankruptcy of Spain, that I daresay many shrewd English City men, were the quicksilver mines of the Almaden mentioned in their hearing, would esteem that still tremendous *negocio* as being little better than some West Diddlesex swindle. Give a dog a bad name, and you may as well hang him. Spain has got the bad name; and many years of probity and punctuality in payments must elapse before the bar

sinister is removed from her scutcheon. Europe has grown so accustomed to hear her disparaged and ridiculed as the "Welcher," so to speak, of the money market, that amazement to all, and disappointment to some, would follow her rehabilitation as a nation quietly paying her way, like Belgium or Holland; just as the *habitué* of the Hall of the Great Council at Venice would be surprised and even mortified to find the black veil which shrouds the niche apportioned to Marino Faliero occupied by the freshly-painted portrait of a respectable Doge.

Next, it must be granted that the Spanish Ministry of Finance has been going on, for at least a generation, from bad to worse. The expenditure has, as a rule, exceeded the income, and in the rare instances when this has not been the case the surplus has been muddled or jobbed away either through gross stupidity or equally gross recklessness. Stronger terms might be employed, and native Spaniards do not hesitate to employ them; but I am not desirous of bringing accusations without the means of supporting them by positive proof. At all events it is admitted that every Finance Minister, from his entry into office to the moment he leaves it, presents to an admiring public, in his official capacity, a kind of compound of Robert Macaire, and Mr. Affable Hawk in the "Game of Speculation." He may himself be perfectly honest and upright; but his position forces him to do all manner of shady things. I knew a man once who used to pray every night that he might not

be poor: "Lord," he used to supplicate, "keep me from poverty. While I have plenty of money I can be respectable, kind-hearted and courageous; but when I am poor I shall be mean. When I am poor I shall be a coward; when I am poor I shall tell lies, and sink to petty subterfuges, and be ashamed to look people in the face." A similar orison might be uttered by a Spanish Minister of Finance. Individually his blood may be of the bluest; his pride of the austerest, his rectitude of the most unbending; but his collar once fitted to the ministerial yoke he must needs stoop to every description of dirty action. Fancy a minister laying hands on the deposits of the poor people in the Savings' Bank! Fancy his "flying kites," and getting his exchequer bills discounted at fifteen per cent. in order to satisfy the shrill claims of washerwomen and hotel waiters who have entrusted their little all to the governmental keeping!

Well, it is not sought to be denied that the Spanish Government is in a chronic state of embarrassment, and that it experiences the very greatest difficulty in making both ends meet, even with the help of a constantly-increasing revenue, and the adventitious aid of the church property which it has seized and is gradually selling by auction, and the royal domains which Queen Isabella very generously surrendered for the national good. The ill-natured assert that her Majesty was to be compensated for this abandonment of her patrimony by an undertaking on the part of the Government to

pay the five millions of reals which the court is said to owe to the milliners, mantua-makers, and upholsterers of Madrid; but I never heard of any Court, save that of England, which was not reported to owe enormous sums to its tradespeople; and five millions of reals, after all, are but fifty thousand pounds—a mere bagatelle for a Court of such antiquity as that of Spain to owe.

A more serious, but still only apparent, symptom of Spanish poverty is the lamentable condition of her railway interest. Ere this work is published it is possible, but only barely possible, that the Government may have guaranteed the interest on debentures for which the Spanish railways were crying, as the only measure which could avert collapse and bankruptcy from the companies *en masse*. It is, unhappily, just as possible that the earnestly-desired guarantee has not been given, and that the companies will remain, as before, at their wits' end to know how to tide over their difficulties. Let it be understood, however, that the miserable sufferers from insufficient traffic, a preposterously inflated nominal capital, and crushing liabilities, are not native Spaniards, but foreigners—chiefly Frenchmen. In that memorable "Handbook," which, with all its faults, its irreverence, its Tory prejudices, and its absurd deification of the late Duke of Wellington, is still, as a work of observation, picturesque description, wit, humour, and research, infinitely superior to "Eöthen," and second only to the "Sentimental Journey," and, as a

mere guide-book, is the best that ever was written, and fit to be bound up with "Don Quixote" and "Gil Blas" in one glorious Spanish trilogy, the late Mr. Ford, ambling along on his Andalusian jennet, or humbler but surer-footed mule, or occasionally having recourse to the lumbering *diligencia*, was wont to be very jocose on the railways *in futuro*, which were to be built with foreign capital for the benefit of Spaniards. But that which he almost disdained to predict, and treated as a chimerical notion, has become a fact—not very solid, and not very satisfactory, but still a fact, from which, in process of time, some good may arise. Nine-tenths of the money subscribed for the erection of Spanish railways has come from France.

There are one or two English companies, which have not only built, but continue to run, lines in the south; and several English engineers have netted handsome sums by planning and contracting for the building of lines and portions of lines all over the country; but English capitalists have, as a rule, declined to have anything to do with the "Spanish;" and the great body of the shareholders in the railways of Spain are subjects of Napoleon III. The reader is aware that shortly after the accession of that sagacious sovereign to the throne, the French people were bitten with the tarantula spider of speculation. Before 1852, a Frenchman scarcely knew what a share in a joint-stock company was. He was quite content to know that his money was inscribed in the Grand Livre; he drew his modest

*rentes;* and if the funds kept up to seventy he was happy. But since the *coup-d'état* his talk has been all about *Crédits Fonciers* and *Crédits Mobiliers, Sociétés Anonymes* and *Sociétés en Commandite, actions, jouissances,* and *conseils de surveillance.* He was good enough to buy up the omnibuses of London; to set the initiative for all the joint-stock hotel companies which have now become the affliction and opprobrium of civilization—which drive travellers mad with joint-stock wines, and joint-stock damp sheets, and joint-stock rudeness, and joint-stock extortion. Then he thought it would be an excellent thing to cover Spain with railways. A Frenchman built the Escorial—so at least Frenchmen say; why should not the lively Gaul bestow a gridiron network on the plains of Castile and tunnel through the Sierra Morena?

Some huge capitalists in Paris took up the scheme; Don Jose Salamanca in Spain smiled on it for awhile, just as he smiles on the Atlantic and Great Western Railway, and as he would smile, did it suit his mercurial purpose so to do, on a railway from the Aurora Borealis to the Precession of the Equinoxes. Very speedily the Frenchman and the Frenchwoman with money to invest were "got at." They manage these things better in France. The skill and ingenuity shown in inveigling moneyed people into the net of a French joint stock company put our clumsy wiles and stratagems to shame. It is as much as we can do to hook an Admiral of the Blue for a Discount Company with

the bait of a hundred shares paid-up, or to cajole an F.R.S. into becoming a hotel director; but the French are in this respect full of resources, exquisite in their delicacy and almost infinite in their variety. Paris is saturated for weeks with the subtle essence of the projected scheme, as some doctors with a view to curing their patient of habits of inebriety are said to mix alcohol with everything he eats or drinks, so French Promoters, but with a directly opposite intent, mix up their new company in the most intimate transactions of daily life. I well remember when the Spanish railway scheme was "floated" in Paris. The *Journal Amusant* and the *Vie Parisienne* had whole numbers full of droll woodcuts about Spanish railways. Novels were written about the *chémins de fer Espagnols*. They were dramatized and brought out with great success at the *Délassements Comiques* and the *Folies Dramatiques*. They were set to music and ground on barrel organs. You had them *à toute sauce*. They were served roasted and served boiled. They sang Spanish railways at the Alcazar and danced them at Mabille. They were made into *feuilletons*, *entrefilets* and *Premiers Paris*. Your pomatum, your cigars, your *demi-tasse* were redolent of Spanish railways. In short, the French market was "rigged" as only the supple and inventive Frenchman knows how to rig it; and the result is that we can go from Paris to Madrid in six-and-thirty hours—a journey which ten years ago used to occupy from five to eight days.

Unhappily there was a market which could not be "rigged," a generation which declined to listen to the voice of the charmer, charm he ever so wisely. Out of the Spaniards, beyond the governmental concession and a moderate subvention, there was nothing to be got. Municipalities were convoked, meetings of provincial notabilities harangued, artful leading articles written, puff paragraphs sown broadcast, speeches made, dinners given; but the Spanish mackerel would not bite, or, the rather, he gorged the bait and ran away with it, hook and line, bob and sinker, and all. The Don was delighted that railways should be built. He wished them every success. He expressed ardent hopes that the engineers might live a thousand years, and that the contractor's shadow might never be less; but when he was asked how many shares he would take in the undertaking, he answered "*Mañana, mañana: para hoy, nada.*" He will take shares to-morrow, or the day after to-morrow. Thus bereft of material support in the very country for whose benefit they were designed, the Spanish railways had led, since the dawn of their existence, the wretchedest of lives. The Spaniards, with a grim complacency very edifying to witness, travel upon them, and abuse the company soundly for the unpunctuality of the trains, the scantiness of the accommodation, and the poverty of the stations; but they consistently refuse to unloose their purses in order to help the unhappy pioneers of railway enterprise out of the mire. In Catalonia, railway interest is said

to be decently prosperous; but then everything prospers in active and energetic Catalonia, the Massachusetts of Spain. The Santander and Bilbao line is said to be well managed; but that from Madrid to Saragossa is simply infamous; and of the miseries of the line between Madrid and Cordova I have already spoken in former chapters.

That which should be the most important and the best served railway in Spain, the Northern line from Madrid to Irun, there connecting with the Bayonne and Bordeaux route to Paris, can only manage to run two trains a day, a fast one and a slow one; and it is probable that not more than fifty passengers of all classes are conveyed by each train, from a city containing three hundred thousand inhabitants to one whose population far exceeds a million. Although the shops of Madrid sell scarcely anything but French wares, and Spanish houses are furnished with upholstery from the Faubourg St. Antoine, and Spanish ladies are dressed in silks and muslins from the *Magasin des coins de rue*, and the *Villes de France*, and Spanish gentlemen ride about in broughams built in the Champs Elysées, and French novels are read to the exclusion of almost every other kind of literature, the traffic between Paris and Madrid, when the importance of the two capitals is considered, can but appear insignificant. The freight trains are few and far between, and but slenderly laden at that. Between Cordova and Seville the traffic manager can only organize one goods'

train per week, and that is rarely an imposing one. Stagnation in age is pitiable enough; but what is to be said of stagnation in earliest infancy? There may be, the hopeful argue, a chance of railway matters improving; but there is a much likelier chance of their getting worse. The Spaniards keep resolutely aloof from investment in them; the local authorities sneeringly decline to mind the highways or the cross-roads leading to them; in fact, no Spaniard will stir one inch, or move one finger, towards the assistance of an enterprise which, judiciously developed, might in a few years, thoroughly regenerate Spain.

Meanwhile the straits to which the companies are reduced would be absolutely ludicrous were they not so exceedingly pitiable. They are in a position fully to appreciate the old saying, that Samson was a strong man, but that he could not pay money when he had it not. They have, or should have, all the elements of strength; but "never a pennie of monie." They are perishing for lack not only of extended capital, but really of petty cash. The goods' traffic scarcely pays for the engine and vans engaged in it. The passenger traffic, although more remunerative, has not begun to be profitable; and in this traffic a curious illustration of Spanish manners is visible. There are scarcely any second-class passengers. The peasants, the *labradores*, the private soldiers, with their wives, their children, their pots, their pans, their water-jars, and their mattresses, travel third-class; but every one who

has attained the dignity of a shabby cloak and a tall hat takes a first-class ticket. Pride, the old curse and blotch of Spain, forbids him to travel second-class. However, as the Spaniard seems to grudge every penny he spends, he travels as little as ever he possibly can; and as the companies are so desperately hard-up, they put on as few first-class carriages as ever *they* can. A practised eye can at once tell that their rolling stock is at low-water mark, that their supply of extra locomotives is not sufficient, and that their staff of guards and porters is kept, for want of money to pay them, far below the usual quota. If you find it difficult to discover an official on a Spanish railway platform; if you have to bawl for five minutes before a porter makes his appearance; and if the visits of guards and ticket-collectors are, in respect of their rarity, as those of angels, you had best not too hastily assume that idleness, or listlessness, are the main causes of the paucity of attendants. The sorrowful truth is that the companies cannot afford to be full-handed.

If the reader see, as I saw in the south, newly-erected stations literally tumbling to pieces, waiting and refreshment rooms dismantled and in ruins, carriages that leaked, engines that broke down, platforms with abysses in them as deep as Ophelia's grave, it were wise not to put all this dilapidation and neglect down to the score of national carelessness and somnolence. The ready money of the companies is exhausted. They cannot borrow any more; and they cannot get credit

for even the most imperatively-necessary repairs. There is that eight or nine hours' break, for instance in Andalusia, between Venta de Cardenas and Menzibar. You are told that all the bridges on this part of the line were carried away by the mountain torrents eight months ago; but that they are all in process of repair, and that the entire line to Seville will be opened "incessantly." But, on the other hand, you hear it whispered that three parts of the portion of line interrupted are perfectly practicable for the running of trains, but that the railway company is paid by the diligence proprietors to keep the line closed for some months longer, in order that the old stage-coaches may continue to enjoy their monopoly of discomfort and extortion. There may be, it is added, a bridge or two which remains broken down, and a few hundred feet of embankment which needs looking to; but the company is too poor to keep a larger staff of labourers at work on those damaged portions than used, according to *Punch*, to be retained for the completion of the Nelson monument: to wit, a man and a boy. Wretchedly imperfect, badly served, tumble-down and unpunctual as they are, foreign tourists in Spain have still every reason to congratulate themselves even on the construction of the railways which exist. By their means, too, commercial travellers from Paris are now enabled to penetrate with tolerable celerity to the remotest parts of Spain; and you may buy *encre de la petite vertu* at Granada, *huile philocome* at Cordova, *vinaigre*

*de toilette* at Seville, and *chocolat de santé* at Cadiz, at not more than treble the price you would pay for those articles in the Chaussée d'Antin or the Rue St. Honoré.

But this is all the benefit which the French—who as mere pleasure tourists are of small account—have derived from the railways built with their hard-earned francs and centimes. The French bagman, too, clever and adroit as he is, finds it hard work to compete with the German, who has taken to the commercial invasion of Spain quite in the Gothic fashion. He is as pushing as his French rival, and far more patient. He can live upon anything, so long as he has enough of it; whereas the Frenchman screams with agony at every inn he patronizes unless he can get his thin French claret—the Spanish *Val de Peñas*, of which the German can drink a gallon without turning a hair, makes the Frenchman's head ache—and indulge in his beloved *cuisine au beurre*. The German can get through three quarters of a pint of oil at dinner, and greases his hair with the remainder. Some French houses, aware of the omnivorous habits of the German bagmen, will employ no travellers but those from the South of France, who have been brought up from extreme youth on oil and garlic; but alas! the French olive and the German olive differ as widely as Dutch cheese does from Stilton. The Spaniards will not touch oil unless it is rancid, and rancid oil makes the Frenchman sick. A man who cannot accustom himself to the eating and drink-

ing habits of a country will do but very little profitable business in it; and finally, the Frenchman in Spain, whatsoever may be his calling, is hated, simply and solely because he is a Frenchman, *un perro*—the countryman of Dupont, and Victor, and Soult. Germans and Englishmen and other foreigners are mostly regarded as curious animals, with no souls, and no manners, but not absolutely noxious or deserving of extermination.

It is time, however, that I brought my dolorous schedule of financial shortcomings and railway embarrassments of Spain to a close. I have the more cause to drop the veil over a disheartening tableau of improvidence, wasted resources, and humiliating indigence, as another attempt is to be made to set money matters in the Peninsula straight. A new National Bank of Spain is talked of. I wish it luck. May it pay off the certificate holders, comfortably adjust both the external and internal debt, satisfy the claims of the court milliners and dressmakers, and tend, generally, to the resuscitation of Spanish credit. The old National Bank of Spain was, so far as my limited acquaintance with it went, a very grand and imposing institution; but in its dealings scarcely inspired so much confidence as does the Old Lady mystically supposed to reside in Threadneedle Street. A few years ago, I have heard, the Bank of Spain had a very large "rest" of bullion in its vaults. According to the usual Spanish custom, under circumstances of transient prosperity, the directors proceeded to squander this

money by discounting paper, good, bad, and indifferent, right and left. At present the amount of bullion in the Bank cellars is an unknown quantity; many persons declare that there is none at all. At all events the Bank have been absolved from the necessity of making specie payments; and its securities are consequently at a discount.

On a note for four thousand reals, paid me by a banker in Madrid as an equivalent for a draft on London for forty solid English pounds, I had to pay three per cent. discount ere I could get it changed into gold Isabellinos. The money-changer who exacted this premium on gold kept a hatter's shop in the Calle de Carretas, and seemed rather disappointed that I did not purchase a *sombrero* of him, *par dessus le marché*. It is only at these money-changers, and at one or two of the large hotels, that you cash the notes of the National Bank; and you must always pay exorbitantly for the accommodation. Outside Madrid the people will not look at a National Bank note. The oblong slip of paper which is supposed to represent the credit of the great and magnanimous Spanish nation, is regarded as contemptuously as a Yankee shin-plaster is looked upon by a prosperous farmer in Western Canada. The excuse of the tradespeople and innkeepers for not taking Madrid notes is, that there are so many forged ones about. This is, unhappily, but too valid a plea; bank-note forgery as a crime throws even the formerly national *penchant* for stabbing into the shade; and the

*presidios* are full of counterfeiters and utterers of sham bank-paper. But were forgery thrice as rife as it really is, the frequency of the offence would not explain away the ugly fact, that the Bank itself cannot give change for its own notes, and that within a dozen yards of its doors, expert money-changers, who can in a moment detect whether the note presented be genuine or false, exact a heavy premium ere they will part with their gold. Even a worse state of things prevails at Cadiz, where the notes of the local bank are at even a heavier discount, and where the British consul has been compelled to warn his countrymen passing through against taking the paper at all. But it is Hobson's choice. You are at the mercy of the banker who cashes your circular notes. You may pray for gold; but he says he has no gold. It is all the fault of the Government, he pleads; whereupon he hands you a bundle of greasy paper, and gives you the address of the nearest money-changer.

At Seville things are a little, but only a very little, better. From the private bankers you will get only notes of the Bank of Seville, or a cheque on the *Credito Comercial*, over whose counter you will receive notes again; but there is the usual recourse to the money-changer. He does not charge more than one and a half per cent. for converting your paper into bullion: that is to say, his ostensible usance does not exceed that figure; but you will be lucky if you can prevent him from slipping a bad hundred-real piece, say, among

every twenty Isabellinos he pays you. I took so much bad money during my provincial excursion, that at last the optic popularly termed the "weather-eye" became a fixed and shining light. A money-changer at Seville was, however, very nearly palming off a spurious gold piece worth a guinea upon me; but I timeously detected it, and with a low bow handed it back to him. With a bow even lower, he gave me a good piece, murmuring something about the weakness of his eyesight. Mine, in the weather-eye, was strong. I have no doubt that the man had deliberately attempted a fraud. I asked a few discreet questions as to the integrity of money-changers of an Englishman who had lived for a long time in Seville. He shrugged his shoulders: "They are no worse than the rest," he remarked. "There is a great deal of bad money about. Sometimes even the shrewdest native will be taken in by a worthless coin. He is naturally desirous of getting rid of it as soon as possible, and he naturally chooses a foreigner, and preferably an Englishman, to pass it off upon. Not one Englishman in a hundred ever examines the change which is handed to him."

No remarks, however cursory, on the actual condition of Spain would be complete without especial reference to the amazing amount of bad money which circulates in the provinces; in fact, "smashing" must ever form one of the chief corollaries to any argument bearing on Spanish finance. In Madrid you do not run much risk of taking bad money. Keep your eyes open; change

as seldom as you can; and beware of gold ounces: these are the principal items of advice I should give to a foreigner in the capital of Spain. The ounces or *onzas,* gold pieces, which should be worth three pounds fifteen, but are seldom worth so much as three pounds ten—the bonny cart-wheel looking pieces which are so common in Mexico and the Spanish West Indies, and are in England erroneously termed doubloons—these ounces are current in Spain, and are generally genuine enough, but have in almost all cases been sweated, or clipped, or filed, or in some way or another reduced in weight. Before taking an ounce in change you are justified in having it weighed, and in exacting a certificate of its exact weight from the person from whom you receive it. Once out of Madrid, however, you enter on the domain of open, impudent smashing. In a three weeks' tour in Andalusia I took four pounds' worth of bad money. Of the sharp young *muchacho* at Baylen who favoured me with the brass two-dollar piece I have already told the reader. At Cordova, the very hotel-clerk who detected that a dollar I tendered him was bad, gave me two bad five-franc pieces, or *Napoleones,* as they are called in Spain, among the change for a good Isabellino. I tendered unwittingly one of these bad *Napoleones* in part payment of my fare from Cordova to Seville. "*Es falso,*" the money-taker simply remarked, pushing the piece back to me. I had no more silver, and was compelled to change gold; whereupon this very same clerk "planted" on

me among the change a bad dollar and two bad pesetas.

Everywhere it is the same thing. In the shops, at the inns, in the railway refreshment rooms, the game of "smashing" is carried on with unblushing and almost hilarious activity. The impudent openness of the waiters at the hotels in "ringing the changes" becomes, after a time, positively amusing. You become, of course, aware of the tricks upon travellers which are played, and grow to be a tolerable judge of good and bad money; and then it is laughable to see how by slow degrees the waiter will turn decently honest. "Thank you, Pepe. I'll trouble you for another dollar: this one is bad. Just one little good *peseta*, my friend, in lieu of this one, which is of tin. Aha! would you? Another bad *duro*? Replace it by a good one and we shall be quits." And so, little by little, you obtain your proper change. You gain nothing by losing your temper. The waiter who tries to swindle you never loses his; and directly he begins to know you he would scorn to cheat you of a farthing. It is only the *extranjero* whom he strives to fleece. If his roguery be detected he is not in the slightest degree abashed. It is an error, he remarks, and shall at once be rectified. And in the absence of any moral stigma attaching to "smashing," lies, I think, its most disastrous effect on the character of the people in Spain. They plead that they have taken the bad money innocently; that they cannot afford to be losers by it, and

that they must needs pass it off on the first novice they come across. Such a plea necessarily begets a very low moral tone, and inclines every man to play at the game of *pelar vecino*, or beggar my neighbour. Juan takes a bad *peseta* from José, and immediately tries to pass it off on Jacobo. The foreigner finds at last that his own stock of ethics is getting very slender; and after taking—say, four pounds' worth of "duffing" *duros* and *pesetas*—has very little hesitation in paying away to the unwary the false gold and silver he has received. The line must be drawn at blind beggars. To the mendicant who cannot see it would be wicked and treacherous cruelty to give alms that will not pass current for bread and meat; but I ingenuously own that on several sacristans and *custodes*—notably to the person who showed me over Pontius Pilate's house at Seville—on more than one palace door-keeper, and on two *concierges* of a picture gallery, I bestowed the dubious silver coinage I had taken in the course of my preceding day's peregrinations. It comes to this at last. You grow as knavish as the knaves who, because you were a stranger, took you in.

The genuine gold coinage of Spain, notably the Isabellinos or hundred-real pieces, worth about twenty-one shillings and ninepence, cannot be grumbled at. It is good, honest, standard gold, very bright in hue, though not so red as the French pieces of twenty francs, and handsomely stamped. Indeed, as an example of mintage, the Isabellino is a comelier coin than our

English sovereign—*la belle et bonne Victoria*, as the French Canadians call it. The tourist in Spain would do well to be on his guard against all other gold coins —the ounces, because they are usually, as I have pointed out, deficient in weight; the two-dollar pieces, because they are frequently fraudulent. I was a more especial sufferer from these last-named pieces, as the only Spanish gold coins I had hitherto known were then current in Cuba and Mexico, where the gold, very old and very pure, has still a pale, dull, brassy appearance. Now these brassy-looking bits are, in Spain, precisely the bad ones; whereas, the genuine pieces have a sharp ring, and a glittering Brummagem look. As respects the silver coinage, the name of the imitations is legion. All kinds of scraps of silver, copper, tin, pewter, albata, and lead circulate as *duros* and *pesetas* and ten-real pieces. You may watch an expert sorting a handful of silver change, and hear him say, "This one is good; this one is pretty good; this one is bad," whereupon he puts it into a separate pocket, to be bestowed on the unwary, at a convenient moment. "This one is doubtful; *but I think it will pass.*" The doubtful *peseta* he slips into the midst of the good ones, as a wild elephant to be broken in is placed between two tame ones; and trusts to good luck, or the carelessness of his neighbours, to get rid of it.

When I came back to Madrid, from the South, one of the pockets of my courier's bag was quite full of bad

money. I emptied it out on the mantelpiece, and left the base testoons there in dudgeon, until the very civil and honest attendant who brushed my clothes suggested that it was a pity to allow so much capital to lie dead. I told him that ne'er a rap of the heap was worth a doit. "*Caramba!*" quoth he, "we will soon see about that. Have I the authority of your worship—*vuestra merced*—to get rid of it?" "You may do with it, my friend," said I, "precisely what you like." He swept up the heap of dross quite blithely, and was departing with it, when I remembered that in another compartment of the bag I had some Dutch half-guilders, of suspicious appearance; two or three florins, which would have had some difficulty in passing muster; and quite a quantity of atrociously-dirty and battered Prussian silbergroschen. "You may as well take these too," I cried, scattering the maravedis, "and joy go with them." He shook his head at the silbergroschen; but thought he could do something with the half-guilders and florins. How he did dispose of them I know not, and am chary of inquiring; but he certainly kept me, gratuitously, in bear's-grease and wax matches for a fortnight. It was not without a qualm of conscience that I used to behold a fresh pot of pomatum, and a fresh supply of cirillo boxes on my chimney-shelf; *mais, que voulez vous?*—my moral sense had become deadened, and I had been swindled till I had gone into partnership with the smashers.

This mixed and unsatisfactory state of currency

matters is from time to time aggravated by an absolute dearth of any genuine circulating medium whatsoever. You wake up some morning, and find that all the money has disappeared. The moneychangers are taking their siestas two hours earlier than usual, and will not be able to do any business until late in the afternoon. At the café or the restaurant they would much sooner give you credit for your breakfast or dinner than change for any note you may tender. I have tried even in vain in half-a-dozen shops to get change for an ounce which was certificated and of full weight. There is no money at the banks, none at the hotels, none anywhere, save at the gambling-tables. You hear that there is a corresponding bullion-famine all over the country — everywhere, save at Barcelona, where the strong boxes are under proper discipline, and there is always plenty of money at call. You hear that the railway companies and other employers of labour have been obliged to send agents scouring the country in every direction to buy up gold and silver at a ruinous premium from the farmers and peasantry, in order to pay their workmen's wages. Yet there is no commercial collapse, no financial crisis, no political scare, no considerable export of the precious metals to France or England. The hard cash has simply "gone in," like the figure in a cuckoo clock. After a time, it comes out again; and very often, when times are said to be hardest, and the stagnation of trade most severe, gold and silver are most plentiful. Such a recurrent

dearth might not, perhaps, be so productive of inconvenience did a paper currency of legal tender throughout the country exist. You get along very well in Russia without gold, in the United States without gold or silver, and in Austria with anything, from a bank-note for twopence-halfpenny upwards. But the monetary basis of Spain is, ostensibly, a gold one; the theory is admirable—the practice only leaves room for complaint when you find there is no gold obtainable.

The cause of this is simple—absurdly, yet lamentably so. At this cause I guessed when I was quite young to Spanish ways; but since then my conjectures have been confirmed by scores of intelligent persons with whom I have conversed, and who have lived in Spain—not in Madrid, the city of outside show—but in the interior, and have deeply studied the condition of the country. *The Spaniards hoard.* In the buried pot, in the long stocking under the mattress, in the canvas bag thrust into a crevice by the chimney, you must seek for the absent bullion. And in this, too, lies the secret of the apparent poverty of the country. The Spaniards are not a tithe so poverty-stricken as they are thought to be: only, they conceal or bury their wealth.

THE END.

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